John Wesley's doctrine of sin.

Bryant, Barry Edward

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Barry Edward Bryant

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Abstract

The thesis seeks to understand Wesley's doctrine of sin within a theological context, the context being his understanding of the 'Christian system'. Central to his understanding of the 'Christian system' is the concept of eternal reason, which is rational and relational in nature, making his theology both holistic and practical.

Chapter one constructs his epistemology, which was based on Scripture, reason, and experience, which were derived from the 'scale of assent'. In this scale of assent special attention was given to 'eternal reason' and experience. Within the discussion of experience, the concept of personhood was discussed. While consciousness was not essential where personhood was concerned, it was essential where personal sin was concerned.

By looking at such topics as creation, the chain of being, angelology, and cosmological dualism, chapter two seeks to outline Wesley's free-will defense of theodicy, which serves as the presupposition to his doctrine of original sin. This free-will defense created problems where the doctrine of God was concerned, and I attempt to show how Wesley was aware of this problem and sought to resolve it through 'providence', the 'eternal now', and 'middle knowledge'.

Chapter three begins by discussing the trinitarian nature of the image of God, which became an important systematic development for Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, and original sin, which is the lost moral image of God, and the marred natural and political images of God. During this discussion topics relating to Adam and Christ (topics such as 'federal head', 'felix culpa', and 'recapitulation' of Adam in Christ) are discussed.

From original sin Wesley believed actual sin arises. Chapter four shows the historical development of actual sin, which was not in relation to original sin, but holy living. This actual sin he defined as sin properly and improperly so called. Sources of influence are then suggested and traced from Aristotle to Anglican Moralism. It is then shown how the cognitive and volitional elements of actual sin entailed an epistemology of sin, which suggests the doctrine of sin is

derived from empiricism, which is complicated by his concept of personhood. Some of the problems this creates are discussed.

Chapter five shows the importance Wesley's understanding of sin played in the order of salvation, and the importance the order of salvation played in Wesley's understanding of the Christian system.

Finally, some conclusions are briefly drawn from it all.

Abbreviations

AM	Wesley, John, Arminian Magazine (1778-97)
ANF	Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson, eds, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 10 vols (Edinburgh: T&T Clark/Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989)
AS	Aristotelian Society
BEW	Bicentennial Edition of Wesley's Works
CHLMP	Kretzmann, Norman, ed., The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
CHRP	Schmitt, Charles B. and Quentin Skinner, The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
CL	Wesley, John, ed., Christian Library, 50 vols. (Bristol: 1749-55.
CTMPT	Kretzmann, Norman and Eleonore Stump, eds, The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts, Volume One: Logic and Philosophy of Language (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
CWJ	Wesley, Charles, The Journal of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A., Thomas Jackson, ed., 1849 ed., 2 vols (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1980)
DOS	Wesley, John, Doctrine of Original Sin (London: 1757)
EH	A Concise Ecclesiastical History, from the Birth of Christ to the Beginning of the present Century, 4 vols (London: 1781)
ENNT	Wesley, John, Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament (London: 1755)
ENOT	Wesley, John, Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament (Bristol: 1765)
Essay	Locke, John, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1689), Peter Nidditch, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975)
HE	Wesley, John, A Concise History of England. From the Earliest Times, to the Death of George II, 4 vols (London: Robert Hawes, 1776)
JWJ	The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., [...]enlarged from Original Manuscripts, 8 vols., Nehemiah Curnock, editor (London: Epworth Press, 1909-16)
JWL	The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, 8 vols, John Telford, editor (London: Epworth Press, 1931)
MAJRL	Methodist Archives, John Rylands Library, Manchester
NP	Wesley, John, A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation: or a Compendium of Natural Philosophy, 3rd ed. 5 vols. (London: J. Fry, 1777)
NPNF1	Schaff, Philip, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, first series, 14 vols (Edinburgh: T&T Clark/Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988)
NPNF2	Schaff, Philip, and Henry Wace, eds, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, second series, 14 vols (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986)

PWHS	Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society
SDOS	Taylor, John, The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin, Proposed to Free and Candid Examination (London: 1740)
SOSO	Wesley, John, Sermons on Several Occasions, 1746-60, 1771, 1787-88
SP	Studia Patristica
ST	Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Thomas Gilby, et al., eds, 61 vols (London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964-81)
Works	The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, Thomas Jackson, editor, 3rd ed., 14 vols, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979)
WTJ	Wesleyan Theological Journal

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Introduction:
A Prolegomenon on Method and Structure

As the title indicates, the purpose of this work is to examine John Wesley's doctrine of sin, which consisted of two main components- original (or imputed) sin, and actual (or personal) sin. To best understand the doctrine it must be considered within a theological context consisting of the necessary doctrines which precede it, and proceed from it. But an explanation needs to be offered regarding the significance of how I have structured this theological context. That is what I want to do in the first part of this introduction. In the second part I wish to discuss some of the contributions I hope both the structure and the content of this work might make to current scholarship in Wesley studies, and research in systematic theology in general.

1. Method and Structure

The problem of any thesis is how to organize the material in an order that best deals with the subject. How and why I have decided to structure the discussion, and the methodology used have perhaps become as much a part of the thesis as the doctrine of sin itself. Yet I would not want methodology to distract too much from content. Hopefully, after discussing structure and method they will recede into the background so Wesley's doctrine of sin will more clearly emerge. I will begin by first pointing out the shortcomings of the most obvious methods one would perhaps expect to use to discuss Wesley's doctrine of sin.

1.1. The Shortcomings of a Historical Theological Study

My initial plan had been significantly influenced by Pelikan, which was to look at the subject as a discipline of historical theology.[1] But more specifically, I had wanted to take the suggestion of Bangs and utilize a historical theology 'in the Wesleyan mode'.[2] Within the context of a historical theology in a

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[1] Pelikan, Historical Theology (1971).

[2] Bangs, 'Historical Theology in the Wesleyan Mode', WTJ, 17(1982), 85-91.

Wesleyan mode I had hoped to arrange the doctrine of sin in a simple thematic order so as to trace the theological genealogy of each point. However, it was not long before this method proved insufficient as a means of exploring either the doctrine's subtleties, or its relationship with certain philosophical issues and other Wesleyan doctrines. I became more interested in how concepts were used by Wesley, and their inter-doctrinal relationship, and not just where they may have been derived. Historical considerations are important and should of course be given, particularly where Wesley's own doctrinal development is concerned, but it will not be the primary focus of the work. This treatment of the subject will implement some of the structural disciplines of systematic theology.

1.2. Towards a Wesleyan Framework for Systematic Theology

This conclusion introduced the next problem, that of finding an appropriate and authentically Wesleyan, systematic framework in which to work. In looking for a structure one is confronted with the obvious fact 'Wesley never wrote a systematic theology', a phrase that has been used so often by so many it has by now become a cliche.[3] There are two things wrong with the assumptions of this cliche. First, it perhaps underestimates Wesley as a theologian. Second, it reflects a conception of systematic theology that is perhaps too narrow. Unless these are first dealt with it will be difficult to justify the concept of an authentically Wesleyan systematic framework. We shall next deal with the first of these assumptions.

There are perhaps several reasons why he never wrote comprehensively about Christian doctrines, and consequently why he has not been taken seriously by many as a theologian. I will suggest only two. First, perhaps systematic theology was too far removed from

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[3] See, Smith, in, A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology, Charles Carter, ed., I, 77-98.

where common people lived for a populist such as Wesley. The driving force of this Oxford don was to bring theology, even philosophy, down from the top shelf so it could be easily reached by all.[4] He desired 'plain truth for plain people,'[5] always writing

> *ad populum*-to the bulk of mankind-to those who neither relish nor understand the art of speaking, but who notwithstanding are competent judges of those truths which are necessary to present and future happiness.[6]

He generally wrote for the masses, not the theologians.

In this respect his audience dictated his style. In writing for the masses Wesley became the maestro of the monosyllable word.[7] It is easy for serious minded theologians who are used to writing for other theologians, and reading the words of other theologians to forget that Wesley's main audience was the simple people who made up most of the Methodist societies. Because of this he was not a 'theologian's theologian'.[8] With rare exception the Methodist societies were the primary market of all his publishing ventures, and his channels for distribution. For that reason the clearer his theological definitions were, the more concise they were, the more contracted they were, the better suited they were for his pastoral purposes. Consequently, his definitions and theological statements often come across

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[4] This popularization was not just true of theology but of knowledge in general, as Wesley edited and published material relating to *medicine*, Primitive Physick (1747); *science*, A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation; or a Compendium of Natural Philosophy (1763), 'The Desideratum: or Electricity made Plain and Useful' (1760); *philology*, 'Complete English Dictionary' (1764), 'An English Grammar' (1748), 'A French Grammar' (1751), 'A Latin Grammar' (1748), 'A Greek Grammar' (1765), 'A Hebrew Grammar' (1750); *logic* 'A Compendium of Logic' (1750); and *history*, A Short Roman History (1773), A Concise History of England, 4 vols (1776), A Concise Ecclesiastical History (1781). He seems to have had an opinion on about everything, leading one to say that while he was sometimes wrong, he was never in doubt.

[5] BEW, I, 104.

[6] BEW, I, 103-4. Also, Elsa Tamez, in, The Future of the Methodist Theological Traditions, M. Douglas Meeks, ed. (1985), pp. 67-84.

[7] Lawton, John Wesley's English (1962), pp. 54-56; cf. Bryant, 'A Matter of Style', The Preacher's Magazine, 66(1991)3, 42, 51.

[8] Outler, in, The Wesleyan Theological Heritage, Thomas C. Oden, Leicester R. Longden, eds (1991) p. 43.

as over-simplified slogans, and unless they are carefully unpacked they can easily be misunderstood. This is the nature of the material we are working with, and the better we understand its style, its form, and its purpose, the better we can hopefully apply it to our purposes without betraying its essence and its simplicity.

Perhaps another reason Wesley never wrote comprehensively on Christian doctrines was because it would have distracted him too much from the practical aspects of ministry. He was too preoccupied by things such as preaching, pastoring, and publishing, to sit down long enough to write comprehensively on Christian doctrines. Consequently, what one finds in Wesley instead of a published system of theology are published sermons. But his sermons were not just thrown together haphazardly. Outler was entirely justified in seeing a structure to them.

There was a historical precedence for organizing sermons into a system of Christian divinity. This was the method used by Ferdinando Warner in his work, A System of Divinity and Morality; Containing a Series of Discourses on the principal and most important points of natural and revealed Religion (1750). It was a work consisting of five volumes in which sermons from various Anglican divines were arranged in a systematic order. The reason for this method was discussed in the introduction, where he said,

> It must be confessed, we abound in volumes of sermons, on the most necessary and useful subjects, which in respect of clear and solid arguments, purity of language, and strength of reasoning, perhaps cannot be excelled in any language. But a regular system of doctrinal and practical divinity, in the method of sermons[...]is not to be found[...]in the works of our most eminent divines.[9]

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[9] Ferdinando Warner, A System of Divinity and Morality; containing a Series of Discourses; on the principal and most important points of natural and revealed Religion (London: 1750), 'Preface'.

Warner's solution of arranging sermons in systematic order was an effort to combine the practical form of the sermon with the structural aspects of systematic theology.

It could be argued Wesley's sermons reflect a similar, certainly an earlier, scheme. The orientation towards the practical aspects of theology deterred him from writing systematically about theology, and resulted in his theology taking the form of sermons, which have rightly become a doctrinal standard for Methodism.[10] Although they were doctrinal standards, and although they were to be taken seriously as theology, Wesley none-the-less thought all preaching should be 'practical'.[11] Perhaps it was this practical orientation combined with his audience, which dictated his style, that deterred Wesley from writing a 'systematic theology', forcing him to deal with systematic issues through the form of the sermon.

Whatever the reasons, one must not confuse simple words with a dull mind, or Wesley's 'plain truth' with facile theology. His theology was anything but that. Just because Wesley was primarily a 'folk-theologian'[12] who wrote for, and preached to working-class men, women, and even children[13] one must not underestimate him as theologian.[14] Yet, in spite of Wesley being seen by many as an important development in the 'evolution of

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[10] Heitzenrater, 'Plain Truth: Sermons as Standards of Doctrine', The Drew Gateway, 57(1987), 16-30.

[11] 'Minutes of Several Conversations' (1791), Works, VIII, 318.

[12] Outler, 'John Wesley: Folk-Theologian', Theology Today, 34(1977): 150-60.

[13] e.g. 'Hymns for Children' (1763); 'Hymns for Children' (1790); 'Instructions for Children' (1745); 'Prayers for Children' (1772); 'A Token for Children' (1749), although not written strictly for children; 'Lessons for Children' (1746, 1747, 1748, 1754).

[14] Outler, 'John Wesley As Theologian--Then and Now', Methodist History, 12(1974)4, 63-82; and 'Towards a Re-appraisal of John Wesley As Theologian', Perkins School of Theology Journal, 14(1961)2, 5-14; and 'The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition,' The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition, Rowe, editor (1976), pp. 11-38. Also, Ashley, 'Wesley's Influence on Christian Thought,' Wesley As a World Force, Telford, ed. (1951), pp. 19-22.

Protestantism',[15] it has not been long since Outler had to persuade the editorial Board of a Library of Protestant Theology to include a volume on Wesley.[16] Neither has it been that long since Davies called Wesley a 'third class' theologian.[17] It is granted that so well trimmed and simply written was his theology, at points it is almost skin and bones, some might even say malnourished. This has left many theologians since to make the wrong conclusion that Wesley was a theological lightweight, unworthy of even being mentioned in the same footnote with Luther, Calvin, Owen, or Baxter. But the substance of Wesley's theology must not be prejudiced by either its audience, its style, or its practical orientation.

The cliche has indeed often resulted in Wesley being underrated as a theologian. But it has also attempted to restrict and understand systematic theology in a far too limited way. Perhaps too many undervalue the importance of the practical expressions of theology. Sauter has argued that the primary task of theology is more than anything else, practical.[18] Schwöbel, referring to Herms, has contended that, 'Although systematic theology is a theoretical activity, it is provoked by very practical problems and its final aim is a practical one'. In this respect, as a rational activity systematic theology should be measured not as a collection of theories and beliefs, but the quality of actions it produces, which Schwöbel has dubbed

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[15] e.g. Piette, John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism (1937); Hildebrandt, From Luther to Wesley (1951); and more recently Clifford, Atonement and Justification (1990).

[16] Outler, in, The Future of the Methodist Theological Traditions, Meeks, ed. (1985), p. 43; 'Re-Appraisal of John Wesley as a Theologian', in, The Wesleyan Theological Heritage, Oden, Longden, eds (1991), pp. 40-41; Baker, 'Practical Divinity- John Wesley's Doctrinal Agenda for Methodism', WTJ, 22(1987), 7-167 (p. 7).

[17] cf. Davies, History of Methodism in Great Britain (1965), I, 147.

[18] Sauter, Wissenschaftstheoretische Kritik der Theologie (1973), and, Arbertswerseer Systematischer Theologie (1976).

'the *consequence criterion*'.[18] On one hand, systematic theology deals with Christian doctrine laid out and explained in a logical and rational order. In this sense it is true, Wesley did not write about theology in a systematic way, as had Calvin. But one must remember that the purpose of systematic theology is not just to promote a fuller, and a more philosophical study of the Christian faith. It is also to promote a practical application and experience of it.[20]

In response to recent trends to make systematic theology more practical in its expression and orientation, Maddox has argued that Wesley was a practical theologian *par excellence*, in as much as his theology is transformative of the human person, holistic (consisting of orthodoxy, orthopraxis, and orthopathy), it recognizes the primacy of praxis, and is contextual (relating to society and the church).[21] The audience for his theology, and the style of his theology certainly gave it a practical orientation.

1.3. Wesley as a 'Holistic' Theologian

I agree with Sauter, and Schwöbel that systematic theology must have a practical aspect. I also agree with Maddox that Wesley was a practical theologian. It must be remembered that Wesley was not just concerned with 'what to teach', but also with 'how to teach', and 'what to do',[22] which is what Chilcote has called Wesley's doctrine of Christian vocation.[23] But I would suggest that it is perhaps better to call a theology which rises from the rational structure of a system to

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[18] Schwöbel, God: Action and Revelation (1992), pp. 12-13, 137-38; cf. Herms, Theologie- eine Erfahrungswissenschaft (1978), and Theorie fÜr die Praxis- Beiträ zur Theologie (1982).

[20] Gunton, The Promise of Trinitarian Theology (1991), p. 4; cf. Wiley, Christian Theology (1940), I, 27.

[21] Maddox, 'John Wesley- Practical Theologian?', WTJ, 23(1988), 126-7.

[22] 'Minutes of some late Conversations between the Revd. M. Wesleys and Others' (1749), Works, VIII, 275; cf. p. 280 where it is stated doctrine is best defended by 'preaching and living'.

[23] Chilcote, Wesley Speaks on Christian Vocation (1986), p. viii.

find practical expression, even in order to satisfy the 'consequence criterion', a 'holistic' theology.[24] To speak of a holistic theology describes a theology that seeks to integrate the thoughts, activities, and feelings of whole Christian persons and their experience as valid sources of theology, although not equal in authority. Wesley's expression of the sources for holistic theology was Scripture, reason, and experience. Any attempt at structuring Wesley's theology must take into consideration its holistic aspect. The practical aspects of a holistic theology confront any isolationist tendencies of theologians who attempt to theologize apart from the life of the church. The rational aspects of holistic theology also confront those in the Church who are so practical in their orientation that they do not value the importance of theological reflection. Attitudes such as that verge on becoming theological utilitarianism, in which the end of orthopraxis, justifies the unorthodox means. A holistic attitude in respect to theology acknowledges the inter-dependent and inter-relational nature of the rational and the practical, and resents such compartmentalization of personhood and human existence into antagonistic and exclusive theological categories. Faith is the orientation of the whole person into a relationship with God the Father, through God the Son, in God the Spirit. Because of the holistic orientation of faith, it must be said that the rational and practical aspects of theology must not exist without each other. Both are necessary parts of a whole, holistic theology.

1.4. Shortcomings of Using the 'Order of Salvation' Alone

Having suggested the holistic aspect of Wesley's theology one is still left with the problem of structure. In constructing a systematic theology in the

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[24] I am not using the term in the same technical sense as Quine, Word and Object (1960), who used 'holism' to described the semantic unity in respect to language. See, Dray, in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Edwards, ed. (1967), IV, 53-58.

Wesleyan mode, Dunning has suggested that it should be organized around justification and sanctification by faith as a controlling norm, particularly as understood within the context of Wesley's order of salvation.[25] This also reflects Outler's suggestion, that the order of salvation is the unifying concept in Wesley's theology, especially in his sermons.[26] To interpret this structure with its inherent Christian doctrines, Wynkoop has suggested using 'love as a hermeneutic'.[27] Bence and Collins have suggested using a 'teleological hermeneutic', in which salvation is seen as goal orientated, the goal being renewal in Christ's image, and glorification.[28]

Following these leads, I then sought to structure the discussion of sin around Wesley's order of salvation. This method has already been successfully used by Collins in his treatment of Wesley's concept of the moral law.[29] But as I attempted to use the order of salvation for my purposes I once again found difficulties. The commonly accepted understanding of Wesley's order of salvation (which will be outlined in chapter five) provides occasion to discuss most doctrines related to dogmatics. But Wesley's order of salvation has been generally researched under the assumption that Wesley was only a practical theologian. It has been wrongly assumed that he was too pragmatic, too practical, to be interested in speculative issues, but his corpus of sermons could not reveal anything farther from the truth. In the coming chapters it will be revealed just how speculative Wesley could be. Even so, Wesley's order of salvation as it is popularly understood does

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[25] Dunning, 'Systematic Theology in a Wesleyan Mode', WTJ, 17(1982)1, 17.

[26] BEW, I, 57.

[27] See, Wynkoop, A Theology of Love (1972).

[28] Bence, 'John Wesley's Teleological Hermeneutic' (1981); Collins, 'A Hermeneutical Model for the Wesleyan Ordo Salutis', WTJ, 19(1984)2, 23-37. Collins' conclusion is that if one uses this as a model Wesley's theology is not elliptical, as commonly accepted, but linear, but I think both Collins and Bence take the elliptical metaphor too literally.

[29] Collins, 'John Wesley's Theology of Law' (1984).

not easily provide the occasion to discuss the speculative issues he did, such as epistemological, and ontological issues, which I found necessary to consider in order to understand why Wesley said what he said about sin. The commonly accepted understanding of Wesley's order of salvation was unnecessarily too restrictive and could not accommodate the more speculative aspects of Wesley's theology. It could not adequately reflect the holistic aspect of Wesley's theology. At the end of my first year of research I frustratingly concluded that the existing methods frequently used in analyzing Wesley's theology were deficient, and too often too restrictive for my purposes.

1.5. Wesley's Concept of the 'Christian System'

What I have done is not merely place several doctrinal themes under the auspices of a discussion of the doctrine of sin, which would amount to a 'medley' of doctrines, rather than a 'system'.[30] Instead, I have tried to organize Wesley's theology around what I think is an authentically (although certainly not a uniquely) Wesleyan concept that justifies the unification of many Christian doctrines and Christian philosophy into something of a system, which seeks to reconcile the rational and speculative aspects of systematic theology with its practical aspects into a holistic theological system. To do this I have tried to structure the discussion not just around his understanding of the order of salvation, but around another broader and more encompassing concept. That concept is Wesley's understanding of the 'Christian system'. Even Wesley's antagonists acknowledge he had a system, as was revealed when John-Baptist Malassis de Sulamar wrote, 'A short

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[30] Josiah Tucker (in 'A Brief History of the Principles of Methodism [...] together with the Causes of the several Variations, Divisions, and present Inconsistencies of this Sect are attempted to be traced out, and accounted for'(1742), pp. 25-26) had accused Wesley of having a 'medley' of principles, rather than a 'system', implying he lacked coherence and consistency. For Wesley's response, see 'The Principles of a Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 59.

examen of Mr. John Wesley's system: The doctrine of original sin examined at the living light of the doctrine of truth[...]' (1757). It was in fact a phrase Wesley used in at least two of his most important treatises, 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), and, The Doctrine of Original Sin, According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience (1757), and a sermon, 'Original Sin' (1759).[31] We will now briefly look at each of these.

In the sermon, 'Original Sin', he described Christianity as a 'system of doctrines'. In one sense this definition provides the broadest catchment area possible to draw from in order to construct what Wesley understood to be the 'Christian system'. This principle is not really anything new, and has been an implicit assumption in Wesley studies for many years. Much work has already been done in reconstructing doctrines derived from Wesley's 'Christian system', doctrines such as justification in Cannon's, The Theology of John Wesley, with Special Reference to the Doctrine of Justification (1946); sanctification in Lindstrom's, Wesley and Sanctification (1946), and Cox's, John Wesley's Concept of Perfection (1964); the sacraments, in Borgen's, John Wesley on the Sacraments (1972); Christology, in Deschner's, Wesley's Christology (1960); soteriology, in Collins', Wesley on Salvation (1989), and Clifford's, Atonement and Justification (1990, which includes an extensive treatment of Wesley); ecclesiology in Watson's, The Early Methodist Class Meeting (1985); more generally in, A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology (1983); and now, his doctrine of sin. These works alone validate the concept of Wesley's 'Christian system'. If Wesley had not been working from a concept of a Christian system it would have been impossible to reconstruct so many distinctively Wesleyan, to say the least Christian, doctrines. But Wesley's Christian system

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[31] See DOS (1757), pp. vi-vii, in Works, XI, 194-5; 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 49; also 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 182.

should also be able to accommodate, just as Wesley himself did, views on science, logic, epistemology, even aesthetics. They should not be left stranded in isolation from Wesleyan intellectual life, not just because they were not stranded by Wesley in his, but because Christian life and theology are the poorer without them. Christian theology should strive to be as holistic as Christian life. My argument is that Wesley was not just a practical theologian, any more than he was a only a speculative one, but a holistic theologian who sought to integrate Scripture, reason, and experience into a theology.

What one sees in the second document where the phrase is used, Doctrine of Original Sin, is a defense of the Christian system against what he saw as the demise of one of its fundamental doctrines- original sin. He used Scripture, reason, and experience (the theological methodology of holistic theology) to defend it. It was Wesley's belief if one did away with original sin, one might as well do away with salvation also, illuminating the inter-doctrinal relationship between the doctrines of sin and salvation. More about the importance of the doctrine of original sin to Wesley's understanding of the Christian system will be said below. It is enough to say for now that from that treatise it became obvious to me that Wesley's doctrine of sin had profound implications on the 'Christian system'. It is important to explore what some of those implications might be for Wesley's understanding of the 'Christian system'.

1.6. The Nature of Wesley's 'Christian System'

But what is the nature of Wesley's 'Christian system'? On one hand, Baker has suggested it could be said that Wesley's theology could be organized as a 'practical divinity', divinity being a commonly used eighteenth century word for theology.[32] But Maddox[33]

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[32] Baker, 'Practical Divinity- John Wesley's Doctrinal Agenda', WTJ, 22(1987)1, 7-16. (continued...)

has shown that Wesley was interested in 'speculative divinity',[34] as well as 'practical divinity',[35] along with 'mystical divinity',[36] and even 'controversial divinity'.[37] As a means of interpreting Wesley's divinity, Maddox has suggested that the organizing principal to Wesley's theology should be 'responsible grace'.[38] Although this is indeed another, and helpful way one could interpret Wesley's theology, it does not provide the necessary structure for a 'Christian system'.

What I propose is that in, 'An Earnest Appeal', the third document under consideration, Wesley endeavoured to show *his* Christian system was organized by the concept of 'eternal reason', which he described as,

> the nature of things. The nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them. Why, this is the very religion *we* preach: a religion evidently founded on, and every way agreeable to, eternal reason, to the essential nature of things.[39]

From this we might draw four general conclusions about eternal reason and its relationship with the 'Christian system'. First, eternal reason indicates that the 'Christian system' should be concerned with the nature of God, which is essential Triune. Second, it should also be concerned with the nature of humanity, which was for Wesley made in the image of the Triune God. Third, it should be concerned with the nature of relations necessarily subsisting between God and humanity, which was for Wesley the basis of the Triune image of God. Fourth, it should also be concerned with the way in which these relations are to be

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[33] Maddox, 'John Wesley- Practical Theologian?', WTJ, 23(1988), 127 ff.

[34] JWL, VI, 213.

[35] BEW, VII, §4.

[36] Works, XIV, 221-2; JWL, III, 218.

[37] ENNT, Romans 14.19; Works, XIV, 221.

[38] Maddox, 'Responsible Grace: The Systematic Perspective of Wesley Theology', WTJ, 19(1984)2, 7-22; also in Quarterly Review, 6(1986)1, 24-34.

[39] See, BEW, XI, 55, but also, 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 591.

restored between God and humanity, which was for Wesley, 'God the Father, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved [...], God the Son, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood[...], God the Holy Ghost, who sheddeth the love of God abroad in our hearts[...]'.[40]

From this one can see the frequently used, classic divisions of God, man, and salvation. But I would suggest that the operative word in Wesley's understanding of eternal reason is 'relation', as it figures significantly into its interpretation, and also because of its repetitious use. I would also suggest that to Wesley, humanity necessarily exists, and consequently has being only in a prevenient and gracious relation to God, and that Christianity was 'relational' religion, in that it seeks to explore and fully restore the estranged relations between God and humankind. Essential to this structure is the doctrine of sin.

The relational nature of Wesley's religion was further reinforced by his understanding of the communal aspect of Christianity, which he expressed in terms of its sociality. It was Wesley's conviction that, 'Christianity is essentially a social religion, and that to turn it into a solitary one is to destroy it[...]'.[41] Consequently, 'Solitary religion is not to be found there. "Holy solitaires" is a phrase no more consistent with the Gospel than holy adulterers. The Gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness, but social holiness'.[42] To utilize the analysis of Zizioulas at this point (which will be discussed below), it could be said that Wesley's ontology of Christian

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[40] 'The Love of God' (1733), BEW, IV, 345; cf. the trinitarian ascriptions at the ends of 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 130; 'The Witness of Our Own Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 313; 'Sermon on the Mount, IX' (1748), BEW, I, 649; 'The General Spread of the Gospel' (1783), BEW, II, 499; 'Death and Deliverance' (1725), BEW, IV, 214; 'Seek First the Kingdom' (1725), BEW, IV, 223; 'On Guardian Angels' (1726), BEW, IV, 235; 'On Mourning the Dead', BEW, IV, 243; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 289; 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 303; 'The One Thing Needful' (1734), BEW, IV, 359.

[41] 'Sermon on the Mount, IV' (1748), BEW, I, 533.

[42] Introduction in, 'Hymns and Sacred Poems' (1739).

personhood is that of a person in communion, with automatic implications for ecclesiology alone.

But eternal reason meant Christianity is not just relational religion. It also meant Christianity is rational religion. 'Is it not reasonable then to love God?[...]Is it not reasonable also to love our neighbour?'[43] But it is reasonable not merely in the analytical sense, but in the divine sense. On this basis relational religion, or religion which seeks to restore full relations between God and humanity and relations between human persons, was rational religion. This was the thesis of 'An Earnest Appeal', and was what Wesley thought to be the central point of the religion he preached. In this respect, nothing was more rational, or relational to Wesley than entire sanctification, in that through entire sanctification relationality on both vertical and horizontal dimensions can be restored. Eternal reason with its rational and relational aspect comprised the holistic nature of Wesley's 'Christian system'.

I intend to say a bit more about eternal reason and relationality in chapter one, and so I do not see the need to discuss it fully here. I will say my conclusions are such that Wesley's understanding of the relational and rational aspects of eternal reason, particularly as it is discussed in, 'An Earnest Appeal' can function as a conceptual, even systematic link for the doctrines in Wesley's Christian system.

When Wesley's understanding of the 'Christian system' is taken seriously, and obviously I certainly think that it should, the phrase 'Wesley was no systematic theologian' proves to restrict not just systematic theology, but also Wesley as a theologian. While he had little time to write systematically, he certainly gave thought to the Christian system, which influenced what he did write, and did think about the

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[43] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 51, 52; the same point is reiterated by 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 61-71.

implications of what wrote had on the 'Christian system'. Wesley worked *from* a Christian system instead of working *to* a Christian system, and consequently was continually working out a Christian system. As he worked from that Christian system he worked toward its practical application. What I hope becomes clear is that his understanding of the 'Christian system' from which he wrote, certainly included not just an expressed practical theology, but a speculative theology as well, and sought to incorporate both into the life of the church. Through his understanding of the 'Christian system' Wesley indicated a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of Christian theology than perhaps what most Wesleyans have previously allowed him as a theologian, which made his understanding of theology more holistic than many modern ones. During the course of things I will illustrate how Wesley's understanding of the Christian system included not just the basic dogmatic issues of justification, sanctification, pneumatology, and Christology, but also epistemology, ontology, metaphysics, even theodicy, and theological anthropology. At the same time I also hope to show how the doctrine of sin was integral to the holistic nature of his understanding of the 'Christian system'.[44]

1.7. Four Doctrines from the 'Christian System'

To do this I have taken four doctrines from Wesley's 'Christian system', and have used them as the framework for discussing the doctrine of sin. Implicit to their use is the assumption that speculative doctrines and systematic issues have profound practical implications for the 'Christian system'. The doctrines are: (1) Wesley's doctrine of knowledge (epistemology), and the relation between the human self, and the physical and supernatural world (chapter one); (2) his understanding of the origins of evil (theodicy), or the

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[44] Bryant, 'Wesley's Doctrine of Original Sin and Some Suggestions for Its Implications on Systematic Theology', a paper read at a day conference of the Research Institute in Systematic Theology, 23 May 1991.

relationship between the attributes of God and the presence of evil (chapter two); (3) his doctrine of sin (hamartiology), or the nature of the estranged relationship between humanity and God, and its consequences on the created order (chapters three and four); and, (4) his doctrine of salvation (soteriology), or the nature of the reconciled relationship between humanity and God, and the renovation of the Triune (but preponderantly Christological) image of God (chapter five). This is outlined by the order of salvation under the headings of prevenient, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying grace. The intense inter-doctrinal relationship between the doctrine of sin and the remainder of the Christian system has meant it is impossible to understand the doctrine of sin in isolation by simply rehearsing a few of Wesley's concise and succinct definitions that surrounded his doctrine of sin.

2. Two Major Contributions

I hope this thesis will make contributions on at least two fronts. First, perhaps it is obvious that I hope this work will contribute to the development of Wesley studies. Second, I equally hope it makes a contribution from Wesley studies particularly to the contemporary discussion of theological anthropology, especially as it has been developed through the Research Institute in System Theology at King's College, London. I would like to start by discussing the first of these aspirations.

2.1. Two Contributions to Wesley Studies

The first contribution I hope this makes to Wesley studies is to enlighten a relatively unexplored area in Wesley's theology. Admittedly, a study of the Wesleyan bibliographies reveals that a tremendous amount of material has been written on Wesley's theology.[45] Yet, in spite of all the books, articles, and insights,

[45] These bibliographies are listed in my own bibliography under their own heading.

Wesley's doctrine of sin is still a conspicuously dark area in Wesleyan research.

I would suggest two reasons for this. First of all, it has already been indicated that most scholars would agree that the centre of Wesley's theology can be described as 'two foci of an ellipse'- justification and entire sanctification by faith.[46] It is no surprise that of all the areas of Wesley's theology a great deal of attention has been focused on soteriology and the order of salvation, and rightly so. The doctrine of sin has usually only been discussed in the context of soteriology, and in a subsidiary role.

A second hindrance to research into the doctrine of sin has been that Wesley's works have lacked a reliable text accompanied by a critical apparatus.[47] However, thanks to the work of Frank Baker (textual editor), Richard Heitzenrater (general editor), and the editorial staff of the Bicentennial Edition of Wesley's Works, this problem will eventually be overcome. Unfortunately, it will be a number of years before the volume containing Wesley's treatise on original sin will appear, and much longer before the project will be completed.

These hindrances notwithstanding, the lack of research into the doctrine of sin is surprising, given its importance to Wesley's understanding of the 'Christian system'. Next we shall look at the importance of the doctrine of sin to Wesley's 'Christian system' and at the same time provide some necessary historical background.

The importance of original sin to Wesley was best seen through his debate with Dr. John Taylor of Norwich, noted Hebrew scholar, unitarian, and founder of the Octagon Chapel in Norwich.[48] The debate started when

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[46] cf. McConnell, The Essentials of Methodism (1916), pp. 11, 17; Dunning, Grace, Faith, and Holiness (1988), p. 48; Outler, BEW, I, 45; Canon, The Theology of John Wesley (1946); Cushman, John Wesley's Experimental Divinity (1989), pp. 49, 71.

[47] Heitzenrater, Mirror and Memory (1989), pp. 205-18.

[48] JWJ, IV, 244.

Taylor published a book entitled, The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin proposed to Free and Candid Examination (1740).[49] What made the work so controversial was its denial of any notion of original sin. He argued, the

> Cause of Sin is the Choice of our Wills, and not its proceeding from Adam's first Transgressions; seeing, upon the Supposition, it would not proceed from it.[50]

His appeal, explicitly at least, was to Scripture alone, using a hermeneutical style that many found difficult to refute.[51] Taylor's combination of Biblical and logical skills were intimidating to many, keeping challengers at bay for some time. Not that Taylor was the first to espouse such theological views, but they did become immensely popular, smacking of Pelagianism and leaning heavily to Socinianism which should have come as no surprise given his unitarianism.[52] An English clergy already caught up in the atmosphere of deism, rationalism, and a limp moralism had no problem in accepting, even advocating, Taylor's neo-pelagianism[53] as the theological vogue of the day. They also ridiculed[54] anyone who held to the Augustinian and Reformed view of original sin as Wesley did.

The hectic rigours of a heavy preaching schedule, and the demands of organizing and overseeing an ever-

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[49] Telford incorrectly states that it appeared '1735-6' (see JWL IV, 66). Taylor was a dissenter ministering to Norwich from 1733, founding the Octagon Chapel there in 1754, and leaving in 1757, when he was appointed as a tutor of divinity at Warrington Academy upon the opening of the school. This means Tyerman (Life of John Wesley, II, 18) could not possibly be correct in putting him at Warrington in 1748 (see Wood, Burning Heart, p. 233).

[50] Taylor, SDOS, p. 129.

[51] See, Storms, Tragedy in Eden (1985).

[52] It is somewhat surprising that Wesley makes no mention of Taylor's unitarian views until his sermon 'On Conscience' (1788), BEW, II, 484.

[53] Wesley, however, never called Taylor a Pelagian. Perhaps it was because Wesley was more sympathetic towards Pelagius than Taylor, see JWL, IV, 158; VI, 175, and below in chapter one. Yet, Wesley had once warned John Bennett of two extreme mistakes, Calvinism and Pelagianism, JWL, II, 23.

[54] See, Redwood, Reason, Ridicule and Religion, (1976), who demonstrated that the greatest weapon of the enlightenment's atheists was ridicule and caricature. For examples see E. Gibson, Pastoral Letter (1728), p. 8; Charles Blount, Oracles of Reason, (1693).

expanding work undoubtedly prevented Wesley from giving a reply his full and immediate attention. After several years, and a number of encounters with Taylor devotees (people who often ridiculed and derided the doctrine of original sin to Wesley's face),[55] Wesley eventually responded with, The Doctrine of Original Sin, According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience (1757). Curnock was being somewhat over-dramatic when he said Methodism is indebted to these encounters for his treatise on Original Sin, one of Wesley's longest treatises, a full 522 pages in the first edition, including all the extractions. It was by no means his best. But it does point to the significance of these encounters in motivating Wesley to respond.[56]

I would suggest three reasons for Wesley writing his response. The first reason, and perhaps the greatest of them all, was the threat Wesley thought Taylor's thought posed to the 'Christian system', specifically the doctrine of salvation. He believed Taylor had done more harm to Christianity than 'Mahomet',[57] and even considered his views 'far more dangerous than open Deism itself.'[58] Wesley thought they sapped,

> the very Foundation of all Revealed Religion, whether Jewish or Christian[...]for *they that are whole have no need of a Physician*: And the Christian Revelation speaks of nothing else, but the great *Physician* of our Souls: Nor can Christian Philosophy, whatever be thought of the Pagan, be more properly defined than in *Plato's* Words: It is [therapy of the soul]. The only true Method of healing a distemper'd Soul. But what Need of this, if we are in perfect Health? If we are not diseased, we do not want a Cure. If we are not sick, why should we seek for a *Medicine to heal our sickness*? What Room is there, to talk of our being renewed in *Knowledge* or *Holiness, after the Image wherein we were created*, if we never

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[55] JWJ, III, 374; III, 520; JWL, III, 179-80; III, 208; CWJ, II, 106.
[56] JWJ, III, 520, note 5.
[57] JWL, IV, 48.
[58] Works, IX, 193.

> have lost that Image? If we are as knowing and holy now, (nay, far more so) than Adam was immediately after his Creation? If therefore we take away this Foundation, That Man is by Nature foolish and sinful, *fallen short of the glorious* Image *of God*, the Christian System falls at once: Nor will it deserve so honourable an Appellation, as that of a *cunningly devised Fable*.[59]

Quite simply, if there is no original sin, there is no need for salvation, and Christianity serves no purpose. Original sin was an essential presupposition to Wesley's understanding of both 'Christian Philosophy', and the 'Christian System'. He wrote, 'We know no gospel without salvation from sin.'[60]

The second cause was the threat a weak doctrine of original sin posed to his evangelism, which was most commonly experienced through his preaching. This is a natural and obvious consequence of what has just been said, but needs to be emphasized on its own. In 1759, in an effort to condense his treatise and popularize his views on original sin Wesley wrote and published his sermon, 'Original Sin'. In 1760 it appeared in, Sermons on Several Occasions, volume four. Several years later, in 1782, the sermon appeared as a part of the collection of tracts published by the what amounted to the first tract society formed in England by Wesley and Thomas Coke.[61] These tracts were to be used as tools of evangelism and distributed specifically among the poor. As a collection they reveal just how practical Wesley thought theology should be.[62] Particularly the publication of the sermon on original sin as a part of the

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[59] DOS (1757), vi.

[60] JWL, VI, 327.

[61] See, 'A Plan of the Society instituted in January, 1782, to distribute religious Tracts among the Poor', in MAJRL. The plan was that 'EVERY Member must subscribe half a Guinea, a Guinea, or more, annually...A proportionable Quota of Tracts shall be delivered yearly to each Subscriber...'. For a full list see, Green, Bibliography (1896), p. 217. 'A Sermon on Original Sin' was no. 14 on the list, and 'A Sermon on the Trinity' was no. 10. See, Albert Hall, 'John Wesley's Tract Society', PWHS, 12(1920), 136-8; Simon, John Wesley and the Last Phase, p. 183; Tyerman, Life of Wesley, III, 369; JWJ, VI, 343 and note.

[62] Wesley published an entire series of "A Word to..." tracts, which may be found in the bibliography.

tract society demonstrated the doctrine's importance not just to his evangelicalism, but to his evangelism as well.

The third reason was his and Taylor's shared doctrine of free-will, or more specifically their Arminianism. Wesley may have published his spirited defense of original sin just to show 'Arminian' did not necessarily mean 'Pelagian'. When the work did appear it revealed to everyone just how seriously Wesley took Taylor's views on sin, and how divergent their views were, in spite of a shared Arminianism. Their opinions on original sin were irreconcilable. He said, 'The same person cannot long admire both John Wesley and John Taylor.'[83]

All of this eventually led Wesley to tell Taylor that in his view it was either,

> Christianity or heathenism! for, take away the scriptural doctrine of Redemption or Justification, and that of the New Birth, the beginning of sanctification, or (which amounts to the same) explain them as you do, suitable to your doctrine of Original Sin, and what is Christianity better than heathenism? wherein, save in rectifying some of our notions, has the religion of St. Paul any pre-eminence over that of Socrates or Epictetus?[...]Either I or you mistake the whole of Christianity from the beginning to the end! Either my scheme or yours is as contrary to the scriptural as the Koran is. Is it mine, or yours?[84]

Of course the letter to Taylor was not written for Taylor's eyes only. Wesley eventually published it for the public to read. Wesley presented choices depicted in the starkest of terms in order to jolt his reader out of complacency in regards to the issue. Sin was a subject no Christian could afford to remain neutral about.

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[83] JWJ, IV, 39, and note 2.

[84] JWL, IV, 68; cf. JWJ, IV, 401. Privately Wesley prayed 'that God would show him the truth as it is in Jesus', JWJ, IV, 199. To the credit of both Wesley and Taylor, their debate never deteriorated to personal attacks, see JWL, IV, 67. The closest they ever came to meeting was when Wesley was on a preaching tour in Ireland in 1760, see JWJ, IV, 400-1 for his interesting account.

Eventually, original sin became not just a 'test of evangelical faith', as Wood has put, but a test of orthodox faith.[65] Wesley was not prepared to call a theology Christian at all unless it included an orthodox view of original sin. This can be seen in a series of letters and journal entries in 1764. In a journal entry for March 16, Wesley wrote,

> I met several serious clergymen. I have long desired that there might be an open, avowed union between all who preach those fundamental truths, Original Sin and Justification by Faith, producing inward and outward holiness; but all my endeavours have been hitherto ineffectual. God's time is not fully come.[66]

Nearly a month later in a circular letter dated April 19,[67] and sent to 'forty or fifty clergymen,'[68] Wesley made another attempt to gather a group of like-minded evangelicals who agreed on these 'fundamentals'.[69] For whatever reasons, not many responded to Wesley's appeal, a fact Wesley lamented at the Conference in Leeds on August 4, 1769, where he said

> Out of fifty or sixty to whom I wrote, only three vouchsafed me an answer. So I give this up. I can do no more. They are a rope of sand; and such they will continue.[70]

Although neither an 'ecumenical', or a 'fundamentalist' movement ever emerged from these efforts, what did emerge was a clearer understanding of the importance Wesley gave to the doctrine of sin as a fundamental Christian doctrine of the 'Christian system'. Historically, Wesley (with Edwards, Hebden, Boston, Jennings,

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[65] Wood, The Burning Heart (1967), p. 232.
[66] JWJ, V, 47.
[67] JWL, IV, 236-39.
[68] JWJ, V, 60.
[69] On Wesley's use of the term 'fundamentals', compare with BEW, I, 530; II, 92-94; and II, 376, and note 7. Agreeing with Outler, it can be said Wesley is trying to 'construct the narrowest possible view of the irreducible 'fundamentals'', but just how 'consciously tolerant' Wesley was of other theological opinions (e.g. Calvinism, Catholicism, Moravianism, etc.) is another matter.
[70] JWL, IV, 235. Notice the original 'forty or fifty' had by that time become 'fifty or sixty'.

Watts, and others),[71] was a part of the first wave of attack against the implications of deism and rationalism on traditional, orthodox Christianity, a Christianity that had become for Wesley evangelical at Aldersgate.

All this indicates that to him the theological presupposition which necessitated the forming of the ellipse was original sin.[72] Without original sin there would have been no need for either foci or ellipse. This forged strong links between Adam and Christ, links that will be explored in chapter three through three themes- Adam and Christ as federal heads, the 'felix culpa' tradition, and the recapitulatory work of Christ. Indeed, were it not for original sin, Christianity would have not reason to exist at all. The doctrine of sin was an essential presupposition to Wesley's understanding of the Christian system.

It is indeed surprising that so little research has been done, given the importance Wesley obviously gave to the doctrine. In the research that has been done, Wesley's doctrine of sin has often been highly criticized by several noted Wesleyan theologians. Flew has said quite simply, 'That there are defects in Wesley's doctrine [of sin] is undeniable.'[73] Curtis admitted that he found no way of harmonizing all of his statements on sin, and concluded that he 'never entirely cleared up his own thinking concerning the nature and

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[71] He wrote in the preface of Original Sin, 'But since none else will, I cannot but speak, though lying under many peculiar disadvantages.' In a footnote to this comment he added, 'Since the writing of this, I have seen several Tracts, which I shall have occasion to take notice of hereafter. There are likewise many excellent remarks on this subject in Mr. Hervey's Dialogues' (1755). The 'tracts' he refers to were probably Isaac Watts', Ruin and Recovery of Mankind (published the same year as Taylor's work), Samuel Hebden's, The Doctrine of Original Sin, as Laid Down in the Assembly's Catechism, Explained...and Vindicated (1741), and David Jennings', A Vindication of the Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin (published anonymously in 1740 as a refutation of Taylor), and Thomas Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State. Why Wesley was not acquainted with these works until after the preface was written is inexplicable, but his familiarity with Hervey can be explained by JWL, I, 331, 332; III, 205, 230, 231, 371-388, etc.

[72] 'The Law Established through Faith, II' (1750), BEW, II, 40.

[73] Flew, The Idea of Perfection (1934), p. 332.

scope of sin.'[74] Wesley's concept of sin, said Lee, took him to a wrong conclusion about the attainability of Christian perfection.[75] Along those same lines of attack, Greaves said Wesley's tendency,

> to identify sin with conscious sin led him to identify perfection with the absence of conscious sins. Thus he set before us an ideal of perfection which is both partial and dangerously apt to encourage pharisaic type of self-appraisal.[76]

If Wesleyans are so critical about Wesley's doctrine of sin, it is not surprising that non-Wesleyans (particularly those of the reformed tradition) should be also. In his introduction to Jonathan Edwards' doctrine of original sin, Holbrook said it was impossible for Wesley to hold on to an Arminian view of grace and a reformed view of sin at the same time.[77] Storms agreed with that in his own book on Edwards.[78] The list could continue.

What most of the criticisms have succeeded in doing is confirming the importance of the doctrine of sin to Wesley's understanding of the 'Christian system'. But because of this his understanding of the Christian system becomes vulnerable at the point of the doctrine of sin. They illustrate that unless one first understands Wesley's doctrine of sin one cannot understand either of his doctrines of justification or entire sanctification. His understanding of original sin had direct bearing on the attainability of Christian perfection, and his understanding of personal sin was developed, not in conjunction with original sin, but in reaction to the holy living tradition. If his definition of personal sin is not accepted, chances are neither will his understanding of entire sanctification. It would not be hyperbole to say a significant, and

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[74] Curtis, The Christian Faith (1905), p. 378.
[75] Lee, John Wesley and Modern Religion (1938), pp. 185-87.
[76] Greaves, The Meaning of Sin (1956), p. 168.
[77] Holbrook, ed., Jonathan Edwards, Original Sin (1970), p. 3; but cf. Blaising, 'John Wesley's Doctrine of Original Sin' (1979), who attempted to show how Wesley did what Holbrook said he could not do.
[78] Storms, Tragedy in Eden (1985).

vital portion of Wesley's theology stands or falls by his doctrine of sin. What one says about Wesley's doctrine of sin predetermines what one will say about Wesley's understanding of holiness.

In evaluating and responding to these criticisms several question should be raised. First, have they dealt with the ontological issues which serve as the presupposition to Wesley's doctrine of sin? What is the nature of God? What is the nature of being created? What is the relationship between the two natures? What is the nature of evil? How can one account for evil given the nature of createdness? Second, have they treated Wesley's doctrine of sin as a subject of the wider issues of theological anthropology? What was Wesley's concept of personhood, and personal identity? In what way are original sin and actual sin to be understood in respect to personhood? What role does epistemology play in the concept of personhood? Third, apart from the systematic issues, have they given special consideration to the historical and developmental aspects of Wesley's doctrine of sin? How did Wesley's doctrine of sin evolve and change over the years? What are the contextual considerations one must take into account in order to understand that development? These questions illuminate problems regarding the general treatment of Wesley's doctrine of sin. The sum of these criticisms indicates that there has been a methodological weakness in analyzing Wesley's doctrine of sin, which can be summarized by saying they failed to consider the doctrine of sin in relation to Wesley's understanding of the 'Christian system'.

It is at this point I hope to make my second contribution to Wesley studies. I hope to make attempts to push beyond the order of salvation as the unifying concept to Wesley's theology to recover Wesley's 'Christian system', which seeks to incorporate both the relational and rational aspects of systematic theology into Wesley's theology. By recovering the concept of the Christian system the unnecessary and often antagonistic divide in Wesley studies between systematic

and applied systematics can hopefully be mended. The doctrine of sin should be considered within the wider context of what he said about the doctrine of knowledge, the concept of personhood and personal identity, creation, the origin of evil, free-will, the origin of sin, how actual (or personal) sin relates to all those issues, and even the consequences the doctrine of sin has on his understanding of the order of salvation. All these are related in one way or another to the 'Christian system'. Trying to understand his 'Christian system' is the nature of the second contribution I hope this work will make to Wesley studies.

2.2. The Contribution to other Theological Discussions

But I have also mentioned another aspiration, namely that from this study of Wesley some contributions might be made to contemporary discussions relating to systematic theology, particularly theological anthropology. For the reason of propinquity as much as anything else, I am most familiar with the work that has been carried out through the Research Institute in Systematic Theology, centred at King's College, London. The recent appearance of, Persons, Divine and Human: King's College Essays in Theological Anthropology (1991) demonstrates both the type and the direction of work that has been carried out through the Institute.[79] I would like to suggest, and only briefly discuss four areas touched upon by the Institute's research, although there are more, as suggested by Schwöbel's chapter, 'Human Being As Relational Being: Twelve Theses for a Christian Anthropology'.[80] These areas were selected because of the overlap between them and my own work on Wesley, and freely admit that my work bears many of the marks of their impression. On the basis of their mutual concern it is my hope that Wesley studies can enter into

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[79] Schwöbel, Gunton, eds, Persons, Divine and Human (1991).
[80] In, Persons, Divine and Human (1991), pp. 141-65.

dialogue with the contemporary issues of systematic theology.

The first area touched upon by research through the Institute is the grounding of Christian theology in a doctrine of the Trinity. As Schwöbel has pointed out,

> the revival of trinitarian theology in many Christian theological circles in the last decade is of considerable significance. This resurgence of trinitarian theological reflection is motivated by the conviction that Christian faith is irreducibly trinitarian in character and that a distinctively theological and authentically Christian perspective from which theology can engage in dialogue with the rich diversity of non-Christian and secular views of reality is therefore necessarily trinitarian.[81]

The authenticity and integrity of Christian theology is grounded in trinitarian theology. Unfortunately, the Trinity has for too long been looked upon as an arithmetic conundrum placed as a kind of 'intellectual hurdle to be leaped before orthodoxy can be acknowledged', which has meant trinitarian theology has been divorced from other Christian doctrines and grievously neglected.[82] Meyendorff has even suggested that doctrines have a tendency to be meaningless when approached separately, which is particularly true where the Trinity is concerned.[83] Indeed, the doctrine of the Trinity has profound implications on all Christian doctrines, from creation, to anthropology, and even eschatology.[84] But, as Jenson has suggested, the 'point of trinitarian theology' is not just to ground itself in the doctrinal orthodoxy of the church, its point is to root itself in the Church's life and worship of the Triune God.[85] Whether one speaks of orthodoxy, or doxology, the full potential of trinitarian theology has not yet been discovered, and only tentatively explored,

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[81] Schwöbel, in, Persons, Divine and Human, p. 10.
[82] Gunton, Promise of Trinitarian Theology (1991), pp. 58-9.
[83] Meyendorff, in, Being as Communion (1985), p. 11.
[84] Gunton, 'Relation and Relativity', in, Promise of Trinitarian Theology (1991); Dalferth, 'The Trinity and Eschatology' (1990).
[85] Jenson, 'The Point of Trinitarian Theology' (1990).

as Gunton's work, The Promise of Trinitarian Theology has illustrated.

The second area touched upon by the Institute's research is that the Trinity is best understood, not in rational, or Augustinian terms,[86] but in relational terms, that is three Divine Persons in communion with each other. This is a positive utilization of the rich Eastern teaching on the Trinity, as demonstrated by Zizioulas who argued,

> The being of God is a relational being: without the concept of communion it would not be possible to speak of the being of God. The tautology 'God is God' says nothing about ontology, just as the logical affirmation A = A is a dead logic and consequently a denial of being which is life. It would be unthinkable to speak of the 'one God' before speaking of the God who is 'communion,' that is to say, of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Trinity is a *primordial* ontological concept and not a notion which is added to the divine substance or rather which follows it, as is the case in the dogmatic manuals of the West and, alas, in those of the East in modern times. The substance of God, 'God,' has no ontological content, no true being, apart from communion.[...]There is no true being without communion. Nothing exits as an 'individual,' conceivable in itself. Communion is an ontological category.[87]

The Biblical revelation that love is an essential divine attribute confirms that point. If God is love there must be another who is the object of that love. The concept of love speaks of a relationship. Within the Godhead both the love and the relationship are experienced and maintained by the *economy* of the Holy Trinity, or three divine persons in communion- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

The third area touched upon by the Institute's research is an ontology of personhood which consists of a trinitarian image of God that is relational in nature. In his critique of the body and soul dualism commonly found in platonic anthropology, Zizioulas has said,

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[86] For a critique of Augustine's doctrine of the Trinity see Gunton, Promise of Trinitarian Theology (1991), pp. 31-57.

[87] Zizioulas, Being as Communion (1985), pp. 17, 18.

> the person is a concept which is ontologically impossible, because the soul, which ensures man's continuity, is not united permanently with the concrete, 'individual' man: it lives eternally but it can be united with another concrete body and can constitute another 'individuality'[...].[88]

Gunton has carried this thesis forward through his critique of the same dualism propagated by Descartes, saying that in the end it fails to provide an adequate ontology of personhood, on the basis that the concept of personhood dissolves into either collectivism or individualism.[89] This is the unfortunate conclusion of separating anthropology from the doctrine of God, more specifically the doctrine of the triune God.

The alternative to this is to look upon personhood as consisting of a triune image of God that is relational in nature. Such a shift would move away from the necessity of imposing arbitrary groups of threes on an anthropological dualism in order to satisfy the concept of a trinitarian image of God. Several have done both historical and systematic work on this alternative solution to Cartesian dualism. Aves has taken the work of John Macmurray as a way of looking at personhood as persons in relation.[90] Gunton has also linked the relational nature of personhood to John Macmurray, but also Richard of St. Victor, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Edward Irving.[91] Schwöbel marks the modern period of development of the doctrine with R.J. Illingworth.[92] In terms of more systematic investigations as to the various doctrinal implications, Zizioulas has explored a trinitarian anthropology and the relationship such a view would have with a trinitarian ecclesiology. McFadyen has further added to the relational aspect of a trinitarian concept of personhood, and has applied its

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[88] Zizioulas, Being as Communion (1985), p.28.
[89] Gunton, Promise of Trinitarian Theology (1991), pp. 87-90.
[90] Aves, in, Persons, Divine and Human, Schwöbel, Gunton, eds. (1991), pp. 120-37.
[91] Gunton, Promise of Trinitarian Theology (1991), pp. 90-100; cf. Macmurray, Persons in Relation (1961). See, Aves, in, Persons, Human and Divine, Schwöbel, Gunton, eds. (1991), pp. 120-37.
[92] Illingworth, Personality-Human and Divine (1894).

implications to social, interpersonal, and political relations.[83]

In respect to these three points, it is my conclusion that the starting point for Wesley's understanding of the Christian system is the Triune God, particularly where his anthropology, soteriology, and understanding of worship were concerned. To Wesley, humanity was created by the Triune God, in the image of the Triune God, to be redeemed by the Triune God, so redeemed humanity can praise and worship the one-in-three through the three-in-one. Quantrille has demonstrated that there is enough material on the Wesleys' doctrine of the Trinity to justify a thesis of its own.[84] Unfortunately, there is not enough space here to do it justice. Consequently, his doctrine of the Trinity will only be touched upon in this one, particularly at the points of anthropology, hamartiology, and soteriology. The most significant and intriguing aspect of his anthropology as it relates to the Trinity is his willingness to interpret the image of God as a trinitarian one, while not using Augustinian categories, which were mostly rational. Instead, Wesley chose to understand the trinitarian image of the Triune God in mostly relational terms. While Wesley's understanding of the relational nature of the Christian system is not as sophisticated as developed in modern scholarship, what one does find in Wesley are the first signs of a revolt against the purely rational and speculative approach to the Trinity and to Christian faith, and an understanding of it in terms of relations, and the experience of those relations. In this respect Wesley becomes an interesting theological case study, and an important figure in the history of theological anthropology in general, and more specifically in the history of the doctrine of sin. Current research cannot really

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[83] McFadyen, The Call to Personhood (1990).

[84] Quantrille, 'The Triune God in the Hymns of Charles Wesley', (1988).

afford to overlook him, and can only benefit from a Wesleyan input into the present discussion.

The fourth area is that theology should not just be entirely speculative, but practical in nature, that is to say, it should not be separated from, but serve the life and ministry of the church in a practical way. This point is an implicit assumption particularly to the work by Gunton, and Zizioulas. It is less of an assumption and more of a statement in Schwöbel's, God: Action and Revelation. I hope that after the above discussion of Wesley's 'Christian system' one can see how Wesley might help to explore and understand the need for a holistic approach to systematic theology. 'Doing' systematic theology is not just the act of reconstructing the truth claims of Christian theology, in many ways it is incarnating those truth claims in the community of faith, and in a missionary sense to the world beyond the community of faith. In short, it is faith expressing itself through love. The reflective and active, and the pious and merciful aspects of Christian theology were integral to Wesley's 'Christian system'. In this respect Wesley has another important contribution to make to current studies.

Having made this introduction to the structure and method it is now appropriate to allow method to recede, start chapter one, and the discussion of Scripture, reason, and experience. These were the tools Wesley used to construct his 'Christian system' with its holistic nature, and to understand the doctrine of sin.

Chapter One
'...According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience': Wesley's Epistemology

1. Introduction

When Wesley wrote his response to John Taylor, on the title page he indicated his doctrine of original sin would be according to 'Scripture, Reason, and Experience'.[1] What Wesley seems to have been suggesting was that there are three ways in which one may have 'knowledge', or an 'understanding' of something, in this case original sin. Rivers has shown that as a body of literature Wesley's work is saturated with the language of Scripture, reason, and experience.[2] Their prevalence is owing to the fact that as sources of knowledge, Scripture, reason, and experience were also the sources Wesley drew upon to construct his theology, or 'Christian system'.[3]

What this chapter will seek to do is establish Wesley's understanding of Scripture, reason, and experience as sources of knowledge. We will begin by assessing the role of tradition in Wesley's doctrine of knowledge. After which we will consider some of the important sources influencing Wesley's doctrine of knowledge, and show how his understanding of the 'scale of assent' can serve as a framework for discussing his doctrine of knowledge. In that discussion particular reference will be given to the concept of 'eternal reason', and the part it plays in the rational and relational nature of Wesley's theology. Then we will proceed to discuss the part experience played in Wesley's concept of personhood, and suggest some implications for the doctrine of sin.

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[1] cf. 'A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children' (1783), Works, XIII, 476; BEW, XXV, 254-5 (1747); 'The Repentance of Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 336; but notice the inverted order in 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 284; 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion', BEW, XI, 176; cf. Samuel Hebden, Doctrine of Original Sin (1741), as extracted by Wesley in Works, IX, 415, and 431.

[2] Rivers, 'John Wesley and the Language of Scripture, Reason, and Experience', Prose Studies 4(1981), 252-84.

[3] Langford, Practical Divinity (1983), p. 27; Cushman, Experimental Divinity (1989), pp. 11-12.

2. Towards a Wesleyan Epistemology

The branch of philosophy concerned with knowledge is epistemology. Wesley particularly developed an interest in epistemology, and metaphysical[4] enquiry in the last phase of his ministry,[5] which is reflected in many of the titles of his works- 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion (1745), 'A Compendium of Logic' (1750), 'Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power' (1772), 'Thoughts upon Necessity' (1774), 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1780), 'A Thought on Necessity' (1780), 'Thoughts upon Taste' (1780), 'Remarks upon Mr. Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding"' (1782-84), 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784); appearing in, A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation: or a Compendium of Natural Philosophy (1777, 3rd ed.) were also 'Of the Gradual Improvement of Natural Philosophy', 'Remarks on the Limits of Human Knowledge', and an extract of Peter Browne's, Essay on Human Understanding. This is enough material to certainly dispel the myth that Wesley was too pragmatic to delve into speculative or metaphysical issues.

From such works one may see that epistemologically Wesley was not a strict empiricist, although experience played an important part in his theology. A strict empiricist would say experience, not reason, is the source of knowledge.[6] Neither was Wesley a strict rationalist, although Wesley did stress the use of reason in religion, and the positive role it could play. A strict rationalist would say reason, not experience, is the source of all knowledge. Neither was Wesley a simplistic Biblicist, although where the final judge of all knowledge was concerned, Wesley was indeed 'homo

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[4] By metaphysics it is meant here an attempt to explore the realm of the suprasensible, beyond the world of experience in order to establish a foundation for all other knowledge, Flew, Dictionary of Philosophy (1983), p. 229.

[5] Wood, 'Wesley's Epistemology', WTJ, 10(1975), 48-59.

[6] Carruthers, Macdonald, 'What is Empiricism?', AS, 64(1990), 63-92.

unius libri',[7] referring to himself as a 'Bible-bigot'.[8] While the authority of Scripture was supreme, Wesley could not escape from the fact that reason and experience both influence one's understanding and interpretation of Scripture.[9] By reason, scripture was understood.[10] By experience, scripture was confirmed.[11] Consequently, his theology, even his doctrine of sin, consisted of the Biblical, the rational, and the empirical.[12] So, before coming to terms with Wesley's hamartiology (doctrine of sin), we must come to terms with his epistemology.

2.1. A Quadrilateral or a Triangle?

Those who are acquainted with the Wesleyan quadrilateral (i.e. Scripture, *tradition*, reason, and experience) will by now be aware of the absence of 'tradition' in the above discussion.[13] Although it was omitted from the title page of Doctrine of Original Sin, it is often included by some who saw in Wesley four sources of doctrinal authority.[14] However, the role of tradition in Wesley's epistemology, and especially its being listed in priority above experience and reason,

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[7] JWJ, V, 117 (1765); JWL, IV, 299 (1765); 'The Character of a Methodist' (1742), in 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), in Works, XI, 373; 'Preface, Sermons 1746', BEW, I, 105 note 9; 'On God's Vineyard' (1787), BEW, III, 504. See, Joy, 'Wesley: Man of a Thousand Books and a Book', Religion in Life, 8(1937), 71; Arnett, 'John Wesley and the Bible', WTJ, 3(1968)1, 3-9.

[8] JWJ, V, 169 (1766); 'On God's Vineyard' (1787), BEW, III, 504.

[9] Källstad, Wesley and the Bible (1974).

[10] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 591. JWJ, II, 467 (1741) for his somewhat unfair criticisms of Luther's commentary of Galatians (3.6) and his lack of use of proper reason.

[11] JWL, VI, 49 (1773); JWJ, I, 471-2 (May 1738). See, Garrison, 'Vital Interaction: Scripture and Experience: John Wesley's Doctrine of Authority', Religion in Life, 25(1956), 563-73.

[12] See Arnett, 'John Wesley- Man of One Book', (1954), pp. 98 ff; Williams, Wesley's Theology Today (1960), pp. 27-28.

[13] This is a phrase coined by Outler, and used by many, e.g. Outler, 'The Wesleyan Quadrilateral- in John Wesley', WTJ, 20(1985)1, 7-18.

[14] e.g. 'The Wesleyan appeal to the fourfold norms of Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason was so widely understood that it is taken for granted', The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (1984), p. 45; Williams, John Wesley's Theology Today (1960), pp. 23-38; Wood, 'Wesley's Epistemology', WTJ, 10(1975), 48-59, etc.

must be questioned. Epistemologically, tradition is not strictly a source, but a medium of knowledge. In his, An Essay on Human Understanding, Locke characterized tradition as a kind of gossip in which the testimony of a tradition is weakened by the number of hands it has successively passed through.[15]

That Wesley had a knowledge of, and an appreciation for ancient authorities,[16] or more specifically 'ante-Nicene' authorities,[17] is undeniable. His intense interest in early church history led some of his friends to give him the nickname, 'Primitive Christianity'.[18] Volume one of his, Christian Library alone contained extracts from works by Macarius, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, works he thought contained 'what Christ and his Apostles taught'.[19] The authority of the Apostolic Fathers stood above all others, second only to the New Testament itself.[20] Perhaps that is why he preferred to call them 'authorities' rather than 'traditions'. He cherished ancient authority so much he admitted he had at one time,

> bent the bow too far the other way: (1) by making antiquity a co-ordinate (rather than subordinate) rule with Scripture; (2) by admitting several doubtful writings as undoubted evidences of antiquity; (3) by extending antiquity too far, even to the middle or end of the fourth century; (4) by believing more practices to have been

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[15] Locke, Essay, IV.xvi.10. Wesley objected when Locke said, 'That any Testimony, the farther off it is from the original Truth, the less force and proof it has' (Essay, IV.xvi.10). But what Wesley failed to realize was Locke's differentiation between 'original Truth' (or the Gospels attestation to the resurrection) and 'traditional Truth' (or the passing of Truth from one hand to another), Works, XIII, 463.

[16] BEW, XXV, 592 (1738); JWL, III, 172 (1756).

[17] For a showcase of Wesley's patristic knowledge see, 'A Letter to the Reverend Doctor Conyers Middleton, Occasioned by his late Free Inquiry', 2nd ed. (1749), in Works, X, 1-79; compare the list on p. 79 with that in 'On Laying the Foundation of the New Chapel' (1777), BEW, III, 586; also cf. BEW, XXVI, 575 (1755); cf. 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745), BEW, XI, 155; and see, JWL, VII, 106 (1782). For a list of Wesley's references to ancient Christian works see, Campbell, Wesley and Christian Antiquity (1991), pp. 125-34.

[18] BEW, XXV, 246 note. For a poem illustrating 'Primitive Christianity' see BEW, XI, 90-94.

[19] CL, I, 17; also in Works, XIV, 223.

[20] Works, XIV, 225.

> universal in the ancient Church than ever were so[...].[21]

Eventually, Wesley came to realize even the Ancient authorities must ultimately be judged by the authority of Scripture.[22]

If ancient authorities were to be judged by Scripture, certainly traditions were to be also. On this basis many significant traditions were not accepted by Wesley. There are several instances of this. For example, after reading John Lacey's, The General Delusion of Christians with regard to Prophecy,[23] Wesley developed a sympathy for the Montanists, saying they were 'real scriptural Christians'.[24] Without saying why, Wesley 'doubted whether that arch-heretic, Montanus, was not one of the holiest men in the second century.'[25] In virtually the same breath Wesley showed a significantly qualified sympathy for another 'arch-heretic', Pelagius, saying,

> I verily believe the real heresy of Pelagius was neither more nor less than this, the holding that Christians may by the grace of God (not without it; that I take to be a mere slander) 'go on to perfection'; or, in other words, 'fulfil the law of Christ'.'[26]

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[21] BEW, XVIII, 212-3 (1738).

[22] 'A Roman Catechism, with a Reply thereto' (1756), Section I, Question 8. Green (Bibliography, p. 99) points out that this was not written by Wesley but by an unknown writer from the days of James II.

[23] Lacey (see PWHS, IV, 77) was one of the French prophets, a group of French Huguenots prone to ecstatic and apocalyptic extremes. Some of their group operated within and on the fringe of Methodism, causing Wesley untold problems, as can be seen in Bishop Lavington's attack on Methodism in, Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared. See BEW, XXVI, 32-33 note. See Schwartz, The French Prophets (1980), p. 207.

[24] JWJ, III, 490 (1750). Cf. AM, (1785), 35-6, 'The Real Character of Montanus', also in Works, XI, 485-6.

[25] 'The Wisdom of God's Counsels' (1784), BEW, II, 555. Cf. EH (1781), I, 113. It is interesting to compare Kneidler's summary of Montanism, in 'Montanism and Monasticism, Charism and Authority in the Early Church', SP, 18(1989)2, 229-234, with Gunter's study in, Limits of Love Divine (1989). There are certain similarities in the allegations towards both Montantists and Methodists. Also note, James Clark, 'Montanus redivivus: or, Montanism revived in the principles and discipline of the Methodists (commonly called swadlers)' (Dublin: 1760).

[26] 'The Wisdom of God's Counsels' (1784), BEW, II, 556. Cf. EH (1781), I, 245; HE (1776), I, 14; JWL, VI, 174-5 (1775); JWL, IV, 157-9 (1761); cf. Rees's own re-evaluation of Pelagius, Pelagius: A Reluctant Heretic (1988).

By attaching to himself the label Arminian he identified himself with one who had been condemned by the Synod of Dort.[27] In spite of the efforts of some to see an Anglo-Catholic side to Wesley he never hid the problems he had with the 'Romish traditions' of the Catholic Church.[28] By his own admission he also rejected many Anglican traditions[29] when he resorted to field preaching,[30] started using lay preachers,[31] advocated the use of extempore prayer,[32] and even seemed to question the administration of baptism only by an ordained priest.[33] The justification by sympathetic scholars notwithstanding, Wesley dismissed the Anglican tradition of 'Apostolic succession' by ordaining Dr. Thomas Coke for the work in America.[34]

In one sense, tradition was an appeal to second-hand experience, which was how Cushman described Wesley's appeal to 'orthodoxy'. 'Orthodoxy' was

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[27] Wesley almost certainly read Simon Episcopius, Confessio sive declaratio sententiae Pastorum qui in Foederato Belgio Remonstrantes vocantur super praecipuis articulis Religionis Christianae (1622), along with Calvin, Defensio Orthodoxae Fidei de Sacra Trinitate (1554), developing sympathies for Episcopius, and Servetus, see BEW, XIX, 204 and notes; for more of Wesley's comments on the Calvin-Servetus affair see 'On the Trinity' (1775), BEW, II, 378.

[28] 'A Roman Catechism, Faithfully Drawn out of the Allowed Writings of the Church of Rome' (1756), Works, X, 91; 'Popery Calmly Considered' (1779), Works, X, 140-58; cf. Todd, Wesley and the Catholic Church (1958), who softened Wesley's stand on Catholicism.

[29] JWL, VII, 285 (1785), where he admitted did indeed vary from ''the mitred infidels' of the Church of England.' For a less caustic remark see, 'Prophets and Priests' (1789), BEW, IV, 81. Wesley also rejected the tradition that St. George was the patron saint of England. After reading John Byrom's, Poems (1773) he became convinced that 'Georgius' was a mistake for 'Gregorius', making St. Gregory, who sent Austin the Monk to convert England, the 'real patron of England', JWJ, V, 517-18 (1773).

[30] cf. Edmund Gibson, 'The Case of the Methodists Briefly Stated, More Particularly in the Point of Field Preaching', referred to in 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, I' (1745), BEW, XI, 178-83.

[31] See JWL, II, 93 (1747), II, 149 (1748); III, 146 (1755), III, 186 (1756).

[32] See, Thomas Church, 'Some Farther Remarks on the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Last Journal' (1746). To which Wesley replied with, 'The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained' (1746). For his remarks on extempore prayer see BEW, IX, 187-88, 195, 538; and 'Catholic Spirit' (1750), BEW, II, 90.

[33] JWL, VII, 23 (1787).

[34] See, JWJ, VII, 15-6 (1784); JWL, VII, 21 (1780), cf. Thompson, Wesley: Apostolic Man (1957); Lawson, Wesley and the Christian Ministry (1963).

criticized by Wesley when it became the theory of Christianity without any experiential form.[35] On this basis Wesley summarily, and rather caustically, dismissed theoretical orthodoxy which was void of experiential orthodoxy as having little, if anything, to do with religion. He went so far as to call it the 'faith of a devil'.[36] However, one should be careful not to dismiss the importance of orthodoxy to Wesley. Orthodoxy was important to him, as his spirited defense of the Trinity, and original sin clearly indicates. He did not dismiss orthodoxy in favour of orthopraxis alone.[37] Orthodoxy is to be accompanied by orthopraxis, in the same way a doctrinally correct faith should be accompanied by a living faith, and a living faith should be accompanied by works. This was Wesley's point, as Cushman rightly pointed out.[38]

But tradition is also an appeal to second-hand experience, and the theology of a previous generation. The point is, all traditions, whether Apostolic, ancient, or modern, were always subjected to Wesley's personal scrutiny, and valuation, according to Scripture, reason, and experience. When he failed to accept a tradition, whatever it was, whatever its source, or whatever its age, it was essentially on the basis of his understanding of Scripture and his experience of it. Ultimately, a tradition was accepted by Wesley only so far as it was understood to be Scriptural.[39]

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[35] Cushman, Experimental Divinity (1989), p. 90. Note Wesley's remark on orthodoxy in JWL, III, 183 (1756), 'Orthodoxy[...]or right opinion, is but a slender part of religion at best, and sometimes no part at all.' Although the remainder of the letter appeared in AM (1779), 598-601, these words did not. Note also, 'On the Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 146; 'On Living Without God' (1790), BEW, IV, 175; 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 66; 'On the Trinity' (1775), BEW, II, 374-75.

[36] JWL, III, 183 (1756); cf. 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), I, 119-20; 'The Almost Christian' (1741), BEW, I, 138-9; 'The Marks of the New Birth' (1748), BEW, I, 418.

[37] See, Clapper, Wesley on Religious Affections (1989). I am aware of liberation theology's usage of the word and am convinced of a certain affinity between what Wesley indicates and the point made about 'orthopraxis' by liberation theology, e.g. Gutierrez, Theology of Liberation (1973), pp. 6-20.

[38] Cushman, Experimental Divinity (1989), pp. 86-100.

[39] JWL, III, 172 (1756). Williams, Wesley's Theology Today (1960), p. 29.

A more positive, and more appropriate understanding of Wesley's use of tradition is perhaps looking at it as a history of the right interpretation of Scripture, and how Scripture was understood in a (as opposed to 'its') historical context.[40] Tradition may then be understood as the history of Ante-Nicene, Reformation, and Anglican Biblical interpretation. In this sense Wesley was certainly 'traditional' in his understanding of the doctrine of original sin, insofar as the traditional (or the orthodox) understanding of original sin was what he considered to be in accord with the right interpretation of Scripture. Scripture was the criterion by which tradition was judged. In turn, reason, and experience helped to interpret Scripture. This was how Wesley was able to borrow from so many different Christian traditions, making his one of the most eclectic, and perhaps most ecumenical theologies one may find. Each tradition he borrowed from expressed a certain exegetical conclusion reached by Wesley. How he particularly used many of these influences in the order of salvation will be seen in chapter five.

All of these traditions formed what can best be interpreted as a history of exegesis. For Wesley this was tradition. Yet, in terms of his epistemology 'tradition' was made redundant, cutting it from the traditional Wesleyan quadrilateral, leaving an epistemological triangle.

All this is substantiated when one studies the epistemological connotations of the words 'Scripture', 'reason', and 'experience' as used by Wesley. Two documents critical to understanding this are Wesley's, 'Remarks upon Mr. Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding"', and, 'A Compendium of Logic', mainly because he extracted Locke's 'Essay', and used his own 'Compendium' to correct its deficiencies.

Relatively little work has been done on Wesley's epistemology. The two most comprehensive treatments of the subject have been by Brantley and Shimitzu. Brantley's work was perhaps too focused on Locke's and Wesley's relationship with English romanticism to

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[40] My thanks to Christoph Schwöbel for this insight.

provide an accurate view of Wesley's epistemology. However, as Rack has pointed out, the major weakness of the work was its failure to realize the differences between Locke and Browne.[41] Shimitzu's treatment was much more comprehensive, as it isolated several of the major sources of influence upon Wesley's epistemology, which were not just Locke, but also Browne, Norris, and Malebranche.[42] Brantley, and Shimitzu have been helpful in illuminating the important philosophical sources of influences on Wesley's thought. However important their respective works might be, neither gave much treatment of another important source of influence on Wesley's epistemology- Henry Aldrich.

2.2. John Wesley, Henry Aldrich, and Pope John XXI

From 1782-84 Wesley extracted parts of John Locke's, An Essay concerning Human Understanding (1689) for publication in the Arminian Magazine, under the general title, 'Remarks upon Mr. Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding"'.[43] It was mostly extractions from the chapters on 'Power' (II.xxi), and 'Of our Complex Ideas of Substance' (II.xxiii), to which Wesley attached several critical comments. Most of the material related to free-will, in keeping with the editorial policy of the Arminian Magazine. However, his extraction of its parts should not be taken as Wesley's unconditional endorsement of the whole. Wesley was so disappointed in Books 3 and 4 he did not even bother to extract them. Instead, he published only his unrelenting criticisms of them. This fact almost makes a mockery of his qualified endorsement. Wesley did not believe Methodists should read Locke without either the help of a competent tutor, or, 'the Remarks in the Arminian Magazine'.[44] In other words, Locke is not to be read without Wesley.

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[41] Brantley, Locke, Wesley (1984). See Rack's review, 'Wesley and Romanticism', PWHS, 45(1989), 63-5.

[42] Shimitzu, 'The Epistemology in the Thought of John Wesley' (1980).

[43] To see what parts of the Essay appeared in the AM see Brantley, Locke, Wesley (1984), pp. 221-25.

[44] 'Remarks upon Mr. Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding"', Works, XIII, 464; AM, 7(1784), 316; JWL, VII, 228 (1784).

In writing his criticisms of Locke's Essay, Wesley drew upon a text crucial to his own formation as a logician in the Aristotelian tradition- Henry Aldrich's text, Artis Logicae Compendium (1691). Alrich's was the text he would have studied while a student at Oxford. It had replaced the superior work of Robert Sanderson, Logicae Artis Compendium (1615) as the standard text in logic at Oxford.[45] It was also the textbook he used while a tutor at Lincoln College, and Moderator of disputations at the college,[46] Three of his graduates were given tuition in Aldrich.[47] In 1750 Wesley translated Aldrich's latin text[48] so it could be used at his Kingswood School,[49] eventually publishing it that same year as, 'A Compendium of Logic'.[50] That Wesley eventually developed a respect for Sanderson's work is evident in the fact the second edition (1756) of the 'Compendium' was expanded to include, 'Of the manner of using logic, extracted from Bishop Sanderson.'[51] As one writer has put it, the result of this translation was that 'Wesley breathed life into the dry bones of Aldrich.'[52] Any attempt to understand Wesley's epistemology which does not take this text into careful consideration will miss many important insights.

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[45] For a literal English translation of Aldrich see, Rudiments of Logic (1827). The British Library copy was bound together with Hind, Introduction to Logic (1827); cf. Whately, Elements of Logic (1826), which was itself an extraction and adaptation of Aldrich.

[46] Green, Young Wesley (1963), p. 130.

[47] Green, Young Wesley (1963), p. 133.

[48] JWJ, III, 459 and n. (1750). The translation took him all of 'three or four hours' while waiting for the tide to go out so he could complete his journey from Tan-y-bwlch to Moel-y-don. Benjamin Ingham had translated Aldrich himself in September 1733, Heitzenrater, Diary (1985), p. 259.

[49] See, 'A Short Account of Kingswood School' (1749); cf. JWJ, III, 530-52 (1751).

[50] Tyerman, Life of Wesley (1878), II, 90; Green, Bibliography (1896), p. 68.

[51] Wesley read Sanderson's, Logicae Artis Compendium, Artihmatickal Logic, and, The Usefulness of Mathematics in 1730 (see Green, Young Wesley (1963), p. 295). Further use of Sanderson at Oxford is indicated in Benjamin Ingham's own reading of the text (Heiztenrater, Diary (1985), pp. 261 ff.). Wesley acknowledged the influence of Sanderson's section 'Of Treating on a Problem' on his sermons, 'The Means of Grace' (1746), and 'The Nature of Enthusiasm' (1750). Also, see BEW, I, 25 n.

[52] Brigden, 'Wesley and the 'Dry Bones of Aldrich'', PWHS, 7(1951), 124.

In taking into account the influence of Aldrich's work on Wesley one must begin with a source that influenced Aldrich. What has been completely overlooked by most Wesleyan scholars is the fact that Aldrich and Sanderson had themselves relied heavily upon another work, that of Peter of Spain, (Pope John XXI, d. 1277) a Thomist, a Dominican, a logician, and Pope. His, Summulae Logicales became a standard medieval textbook of logic, which went through some 166 reprinted editions.[53] A certain amount of similarity between Peter of Spain's work and his contemporaries has also been noted. Mullally has noticed a considerable amount of 'literal resemblance' between the systems of Peter of Spain, William of Sherwood, and Lambert of Duxerre, and suggested that they studied together in Paris.[54] But more recent scholarship has proven that while Peter of Spain did study in Paris, Shyreswood never studied there. That fact notwithstanding, Libera has argued rather convincingly for a strong Parisian influence at Oxford after 1250 at the latest. Libera has suggested that it was perhaps only the zeal of Roger Bacon, the former Parisian master and regent of arts, that prevented Oxford from succumbing entirely to the Parisian influence.[55] This was enough to have established a Parisian influence at Oxford, which eventually became the shared logical tradition of Peter of Spain, Henry Aldrich, and John Wesley.

There are several similarities between the three. Peter of Spain made the study of grammar a part of logic, a trait seen in both Aldrich and Wesley. Also common to all three are the ideas of universals and predicables, of words as signs and the signification of objects, and of syllogisms.[56] A more graphic sign of

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[53] Mullally, The 'Summulae Logicales' of Peter of Spain, vol. 8 in Publications in Mediaeval Studies (1945); Kneale, Development of Logic (1962), pp. 234-35; Thomas, History of the Schoolmen (1941), p. 462; Kretzmann, ed., CHLMP (1982), pp. 167-78, 877-78.

[54] Mullally, 'Summulae Logicales' (1945), p. xxi.

[55] Libera, in CHLMP, Kretzmann, ed. (1988), pp. 174-87.

[56] 'Compendium' (1750), Works, XIII, 169; cf. Peter of Spain, 'Syllogisms', CTMPT, (1988), pp. 224-5. There is an anecdote about Wesley instructing his students to pin the 24 modes of syllogisms inside their gowns to aid them in their debating skills until the modes could be memorized.

influence was the 'square of opposition' which was used to analyze modal sentences.[57] All of this was used to construct modal logic, or the logic of necessities and possibilities (or contingents). This was derived from Aristotle's modal theory based on 'possibility', which eventually became the basis for several other theories, such as the 'Principle of Plenitude' (a concept which will be discussed more fully in the next chapter),[58] the 'best of possible worlds', and can even help to explain the relationship between God's foreknowledge and human freedom (two more doctrines that were issues for Wesley, which will also be discussed in the next chapter). While it must be admitted that Wesley recognized the limitations and hindrances many medieval methodologies placed on natural philosophy and scientific discovery, and credited Bacon for 'understanding the defects of the school-philosophy',[59] he was still indebted to them for many other things. Examples of such indebtedness are best seen in his 'Compendium of Logic'. If Wesley did indeed breathe life into the dry bones of Aldrich, because of Peter of Spain's influence on both Aldrich and Sanderson, what was resurrected was not just Aldrich. To a certain extent it was also Peter of Spain's brand of medieval and Thomistic Aristotelianism. The influence of this Aristotelianism on the thought of John Wesley must not be underestimated.

2.3. Locke and the Schoolmen

Neither should one underestimate Locke's rejection of this same Aristotelianism. While at Oxford, Locke would have been exposed to the same medieval Aristotelianism, with its emphasis on grammar and formal logic, as seen in Aldrich and Sanderson. But, Locke had little or no interest in all that.[60] He was, in fact,

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[57] Modal sentences characterized another related sentence of proposition as true, that is, the mode in which it is true, and the logical relationships between four categorical propositions, which were traditionally represented by A, E, I, and O. See Antony Flew, Dictionary of Philosophy (1983), pp. 337-38. See Kretzmann, ed., CHLMP, pp. 342-45; cf. 'Compendium of Logic', in Works, XIV, 166.

[58] Kretzmann, ed., CHLMP (1982), p. 344.

[59] NP (1777), I, 15.

[60] Kneale, Logic (1962), p. 312.

rather dismissive of Aristotle's importance, saying, 'God has not been so sparing to Men to make them barely two-legged Creatures, and left it to *Aristotle* to make them Rational[...]'.[61] In the end, Locke's response to the philosophy of both Aristotle and the Schoolmen was one of 'contemptuous antagonism'.[62] It is no wonder that after reading this material Wesley remarked, 'I was much disappointed'.[63] Such remarks led Wesley to wonder if it was not Locke's intention,

> to drive Aristotle's Logic out of the world, which he hated cordially, but never understood: I suppose, because he had an unskillful master, and read bad books upon the subject.[64]

On the last point, Wesley's suspicions have been confirmed by Milton, who has concluded from the evidence given in the Lovelace Collection that Locke had little, if any, direct knowledge of the 'Schoolmen'. He concluded that most of Locke's knowledge of scholasticism came from contemporary English, German, and other European authors.[65] As to the first point, perhaps it was Locke's intention to drive 'Aristotle's Logic out of the world', but Wesley could not allow it. Most of his 'Remarks' were not so much an explication of Locke as they were a defense of Aristotle. This defense put him into conflict with Locke on many points. One point of major conflict occurred on a fundamental- Locke's 'degrees of assent'.

2.4. Locke's 'Degrees of Assent'

As important as logic was as a tool of epistemology, it did not seek to explain an issue crucial to epistemology- what are the most reliable sources of knowledge? To a large extent the sources of knowledge determine the limits of understanding. Locke had attempted to deal with these issues in two chapters, 'Of Probability' (IV.xv), and 'Of the Degrees of Assent' (IV.xvi). The whole notion of probability was based

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[61] Locke, Essay, IV.xvii.4.
[62] Gibson, Locke's Theory of Knowledge (1917), p. 185.
[63] 'Remarks upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 460.
[64] 'Remarks Upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 460.
[65] Milton, 'The Scholastic Background to Locke's Thought', Locke News, 15(1984), 25-34.

upon the mind's ability to judge something to be either true or false,[66] and the likelihood of something to be true.[67] It was a sort of epistemological gambling based upon odds, which can range from 'full assurance and confidence, quite down to conjecture, doubt, and distrust'.[68] The grounds of probability were determined by two things- (1) the 'conformity of any thing without our own Knowledge, Observation, and Experience'; and, (2) 'the Testimony of others, vouching their Observation and Experience'.[69] Locke's method of assessing the testimony of others consisted of,

> 1. The Number. 2. the Integrity. 3. The Skill of the Witnesses. 4. The Design of the Author, where it is a Testimony out of a Book cited. 5. The Consistency of the Parts, and Circumstances of the Relation. 6. Contrary Testimonies.[70]

Based upon these grounds of probability Locke constructed the 'degrees of assent'. Moore is correct in saying that it is Locke's understanding of the 'degrees of assent' which furnished an important insight into his epistemology and philosophy of religion, providing a clue to the essential unity of Locke's work.[71] It could well be argued that the 'degrees of assent' is the linchpin of Locke's empiricism. The degrees of assent were what separated matters of opinion from matters of fact, even matters of experience from matters of revelation.

All this arose from the fact that the degrees of assent were regulated by the grounds of probability. The highest degree of probability

> is, when the general consent of all men in all ages, as far as it can be known, concurs with a man's constant and never-failing experience in like cases, to confirm the truth of any particular matter-of-fact attested by fair witnesses[...].[72]

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[66] Locke, Essay, IV.xv.1.
[67] Locke, Essay, IV.xv.3.
[68] Locke, Essay, IV.xv.2.
[69] Locke, Essay, IV.xv.4.
[70] Locke, Essay, IV.xv.4.
[71] Moore, 'Locke's Concept of Religious Assent', Southwestern Journal of Philosophy, 8(1977), 25-30.
[72] Locke, Essay, IV.xvi.6.

The next degree of probability was unquestionable testimony and experience. This is, 'when I find by my own experience, and the agreement of all others that mention it, a thing to be for the most part so[...]'.[73] The third degree of assent was the fair testimony about the nature of things that happen indifferently as a matter-of-fact, if it cannot be contradicted by another. The blend of reason and experience within the degree of assent itself points to the fact that Locke, like Kant, sought to synthesize reason and experience, which means that even Locke was not a strict empiricist.[74]

The highest degree of assent is revelation, and our assent to it is by faith.[75] This sounds orthodox enough, but closer examination of what Locke meant by this discloses hidden difficulties when each of the terms are defined. The first term to be defined is faith. By faith Locke meant,

> the assent to any proposition, not thus made out by the deductions of reason; but upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extra-ordinary way of communication. This way of discovering truths to men we call revelation.[76]

Faith is based upon honesty being an attribute of God as a revealer. But honesty was not the only Divine attribute for Locke, logicality and rationality were also. The nature of God is that God never reveals any new simple Ideas by way of Traditional Revelation. This was to say, God never reveals anything unreasonable. Since God never reveals anything unreasonable, faith should not assent to anything unreasonable. If it is unreasonable it is not revelation. By reason, Locke meant, 'the discovery of the Certainty or Probability of such Propositions or Truths, which the Mind arrives at by Deductions made from such Ideas, which it has got by the use of its natural faculties, viz. by sensation or reflection.'[77] Reason was reflection upon simple Ideas.

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[73] Locke, Essay, IV.xvi.7.
[74] Cohen, 'Reason and Experience in Locke's Epistemology', Phil. Phenomenal Research, 45(1984), 71-86.
[75] Locke, Essay, IV.xvi.14.
[76] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.2.
[77] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.2.

To Locke, reason and our Ideas would always be more certain to ourselves than those Ideas which are conveyed by *Traditional Revelation*. While initially, faith appeared to be an assent on the basis of an attribute of God, ultimately faith was nothing else but an assent founded on the highest reason. Consequently, 'no *Proposition can be received for Divine Revelation*, or obtain the Assent due to all such, *if it be contradictory to our clear intuitive Knowledge*'.[78] No proposition which is a matter of faith should be assented to without an examination by reason.[79] Faith can never convince us of any Thing, that contradicts our Knowledge. Although Faith may be founded on the testimony of God, yet we cannot be sure if it is a Divine Revelation if it is 'greater than our own Knowledge'.[80] To say or do otherwise would subvert the principles of assent.[81]

Snyder has argued that Locke's view of the relationship between faith and reason was not that much different from Aquinas, but Locke came to some rather unorthodox conclusions.[82] One of which was that reason alone determines what is a divine revelation. Therefore, 'Nothing that is contrary to, and inconsistent with the clear and self-evident dictates of reason, has a right to be urged, or assented to, as a matter of faith, wherein reason hath nothing to do.'[83] Reason is revelation. Revelation is reason. The one who takes reason from revelation is an enthusiast, an indictment frequently brought against Wesley.[84] But the one who allowed reason to determine revelation was a deist, as in the case of John Toland, Christianity not Mysterious (1696). Deism had the tendency to acquiesce all matters of faith to the authority of reason.[85] Locke's

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[78] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.5.
[79] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.8.
[80] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.5.
[81] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.5.
[82] Snyder, 'Faith and Reason in Locke's Essay', Journal of the History of Ideas, 47(1986), 191-213.
[83] Locke, Essay, IV.xviii.10.
[84] Locke, Essay, IV.xix.4; cf. Gunter, Limits of Love Divine (1989), pp. 13-26.
[85] Davies, Worship and Theology, (1975), II, 6-8.

epistemology had a tendency to head in the direction of deism, rather than enthusiasm.

This regulation of faith by reason could well leave one to ask, 'What reasons could one have for making the assent to faith?' The Essay does not supply one with an adequate answer to this question. In, 'A Discourse of Miracles' Locke sought to remedy the situation by saying that miracles accompany revelation,

> rather like the credentials of an ambassador or the passport of a citizen. We believed what a person said because of the miracles he carried about with him. Here is the simplest interpretation of Locke's view.[86]

The weakness of this view is the ease with which miracles can be rationalized and sceptically dismissed on the grounds of being unreasonable, and looked upon as mindless enthusiasm.

2.5. Wesley's 'Scale of Assent'

Not surprisingly, Wesley found Locke's views on the degrees of assent 'quite unsatisfactory', and preferred Henry Aldrich on the matter,[87] who called it a 'scale of assent'.[88] In doing so, he was questioning the very heart of Locke's epistemology, and his relationship between faith and reason, consequently rejecting Locke's outline of the matter. A close reading of Wesley's 'Compendium' greatly augments his comment upon Locke at this point.

2.5.1. Assent on the Basis of Experience

Wesley knew that what Locke called the 'grounds of probability' (called 'degrees of probability' by Aldrich) depended first of all on whether or not the senses had been deceived. Wesley said rather sceptically, 'Men are often deceived, and often deceive.'[89] Yet, in spite of this scepticism, Wesley rejected the idealism of Berkeley, because he found Berkeley's

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[86] Ramsey, in, The Reasonableness of Christianity (1958), p. 14.

[87] Works, XIII, 463; AM 7(1784), 314-6. Neither was the concept lacking in Watts, Logick, II.ii.8.

[88] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178.

[89] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178; cf. 'The Trouble and Rest of Good Men' (1735), BEW, III, 538.

reasons 'to be mere fallacy, though very artfully disguised'.[90] Because of the risk of sensory deception, sensory (even spiritual) experience (either one's own or that of another) should not be accepted uncritically, but should be examined by more reliable means (i.e. reason, and the standing revelation of Scripture), as the reliability of one's experience is often limited by deception.

2.5.2. Assent and the Epistemology of Testimony

In spite of the fear of deception, on the basis of the 'degrees of probability' there can be developed what Fricker and Cooper have called the 'epistemology of testimony', by which the truth of certain statements regarding the experiences of others may be verified.[91] Wesley's own extensive use of testimony, especially the individual testimonies of religious experience chronicled in the Arminian Magazine, made up what could be called Wesley's 'epistemology of testimony'. But the difference between the epistemology of testimony as suggested by Fricker and Cooper and the epistemology of testimony as it was used by Wesley was that Wesley was not just seeking to verify the truth of an individual's experience. He was also seeking to verify the truth of Biblical doctrine. Through the epistemology of testimony, experience verified Scripture and the truth of certain Christian doctrines, such as justification, entire sanctification, and assurance. In the Arminian Magazine many testimonies were extracted from personal narratives and personal religious experiences. This meant testimony, indeed much of religious experience, was 'narrative dependent'.[92]

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[90] BEW, XXV, 186-7 (1725). Wesley would not have disagreed with Berkeley's argument that ideas exist only in some mind, a notion Wesley credited to Protagoras, NP (1777), V, 53-4. See his exchange of letters with his mother on Berkeley in BEW, XXV, 183 (1725). It is most likely Wesley had read Berkeley's, Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous (1713).

[91] Fricker, Cooper, 'The Epistemology of Testimony', AS, 61(1987), 57-106.

[92] Phillips, 'On Appealing to the Evidence', The Philosophical Forum 22(1991)3, 228-42. He observes that William James concluded that true ideas are made by true events.

The epistemology of testimony was also how Wesley reconciled his empiricism with his supernaturalism, a dilemma rightly pointed out by Rack.[93] Wesley used the same criteria to establish the validity of a supernatural event as he did to establish that of a religious experience. Implicit to the appeal of testimony is the assumption that supernatural events were supported by Scripture, and consequently a Biblical doctrine to Wesley (a doctrine which was in itself established by Wesley's own reason and experience). Only after that would testimony be allowed, subject to the integrity and number of the witnesses. On the basis of the epistemology of testimony Wesley accepted or rejected either the supernatural, or the spiritual account.

2.5.3. Assent on the Basis of Reason and Nature

While individuals deceive and are deceived, 'reason and nature', on the other hand, 'are not often deceived, and seldom do they deceive their followers.'[94] As the scale of assent proceeded from experience to reason, Wesley's understanding of the relationship between faith and reason started to unfold. It began by implying that reason, and nature, were in some ways less effected by sin than sensory perception, and consequently more reliable. We have seen what Locke meant by it, but what did Wesley mean by 'reason'?

2.5.4. Eternal Reason

Wesley spoke of reason in two ways. First of all he meant,

> eternal reason, the nature of things: the nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them. Why, this is the very religion we preach: a religion evidently founded on, and every way agreeable to, eternal reason, to the essential nature of things. Its foundation stands on the nature of God and the nature of man, together with their mutual relations[...]It finishes all by restoring the due relations between God and man, by uniting for ever the

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[93] Rack, 'Wesley and Romanticism', PWHS 45(1989), 63-65.
[94] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178.

> tender father and the grateful, obedient son[...].[85]

When put into the wider context of his theology this statement can be interpreted to understand eternal reason as something of a recurring theme in Wesley, and a way of understanding his 'Christian system'. First of all, it unifies the doctrine of God with anthropology, in that it is concerned with the nature of God and the nature of humanity, and the characteristics of the attributes shared between them. For Wesley, the nature of this relation was expressed anthropologically as the trinitarian image of the Triune God. The trinitarian image of the Triune God is the conceptual and theological link between the nature of God and the nature of humanity. The nature of the Triune God is reflected in humanity by understanding the image of God as specifically the trinitarian image of the Triune God. This will be shown in chapter three.

It also unifies the doctrine of God and anthropology with hamartiology. What will also be argued in chapter three is that since the essential attribute of this image is not its rational, but its relational nature, original sin is the estrangement of the relational nature between God and humankind as a result of the loss of the moral image of God. This relational estrangement Wesley called 'natural man'. That is to say, relational estrangement is the natural state of Divine and human relations, without the grace of God. But no one exists without the grace of God, as prevenient (or as Wesley sometimes called it, 'preventing') grace is granted to all. Prevenient grace will be discussed in chapter four as a part of the order of salvation.

Thirdly, it unifies the doctrine of God, anthropology, hamartiology, with a fourth concept- soteriology. The relation between the Triune God and humanity exists

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[85] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI , 55. Cf. 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 590 and note 12, where the reader is referred to Augustine, De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII (q. LXVI, 'De ideis'), in Migne, PL, XL.29-31; Aquinas, Super Sent. I.36; in Summa Contra Gentiles, I.54; Summa Theologica, I, Qq. 55, 56, 93; in De Veritate, Q. 3; and in Quodlibeta, IV. Q. 1.

in four states, the prevenient state, the justified state, the sanctified state, and the glorified state. These states comprise Wesley's order of salvation which entails the renovation of the trinitarian image of God in humanity, and renewal of the mind which was in Christ. What makes this link is the understanding of the renovation of the image of God as the way by which the restoration of the relations between God and humanity is completed. The soteriological termed used by Wesley to describe this renovation of the relational aspects of the Triune image of God was entire sanctification, or love of God and neighbour, all of which was grounded ontologically in eternal reason. Here is where Wesley's soteriology is linked with his understanding of eternal reason.

The concept of eternal reason meant rational religion was relational religion, or 'the nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them'. This was the thesis of 'An Earnest Appeal', and what Wesley thought to be the central point of the religion he preached. A religion which is rational will seek to restore the relations between God and humankind. 'Is it not reasonable then to love God?[...]Is it not reasonable also to love our neighbour?'[**] Love restores relations. This is rational religion. By equating this to eternal reason, the relational aspects of his soteriology (i.e. love between God and humankind, and love between persons) became grounded in ontology. The relational aspect of that ontology was grounded in the Trinitarian nature of the Godhead. In this respect, nothing was more rational, or relational to Wesley than entire sanctification. This is the nature of Wesley's 'Christian system'.

2.5.5. Analytical Reason

Obviously, he did not confine his understanding of reason to eternal reason only. He had another, more analytical usage of the word. His second definition of

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[**] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 51, 52; the same point is reiterated by 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 61-71.

reason meant one's 'faculty of reasoning',[97] or 'logic', which also involved one's 'argument' for thinking something.[98] In turn he had two understandings of logic. In the first meaning of 'Logic' was the 'Art of Reasoning',[99] not, as Hobbes had said, only ''a well-ordered train of words''.[100] But, if logic were an art, then for Wesley, Aristotle was the master painter whose strokes were to imitated. Another, and less poetical meaning of logic described the 'operations of the mind', which included connotations of experience in it also. These consisted of simple apprehension (the 'bare conceiving a thing in the mind'), judgment (the'mind's determining in itself, that the things it conceives agree or disagree'), and discourse (the 'progress of the mind from one judgment to another').[101] These operations of the mind are another instance of Wesley's preference of Aldrich over Locke. Wesley accused Locke of having a 'total ignorance of logic'.[102] Logic for Wesley meant the art of reasoning and the operations of the mind. Logic in turn meant reason. This was Wesley's most common usage of the word reason.

Wesley exhorted all 'who seek after true religion [i.e. rational and relational religion] to use all the reason which God hath given them in searching out the things of God.'[103] In other words, one is to use the analytical nature of reason to search out eternal reason. What Wesley tried to do was find a medium between two extremes- 'undervaluing and overvaluing

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[97] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 55.

[98] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 591.

[99] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 161.

[100] BEW, II, 184 and note 68, 'The quotation is not from Hobbes directly but from John Norris, Reflections Upon the Conduct of Human Life, p. 44', cf. Hobbes, Leviathan, I.iv.12.

[101] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 590; cf. 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 56. These concepts were derived from Aldrich and presented in his, 'A Compendium of Logic' (1750), Works, XIV, 161, and preferred over Locke's concepts, 'Remarks upon Mr. Locke's Essay', AM 5(1782), 195, in Works, XIII, 456.

[102] 'Remarks upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 464; AM, 7(1784), 316.

[103] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 56.

[analytical] reason', between enthusiasm and rationalism, something he thought Watts had been more successful in doing than Locke, although he thought neither of them had succeeded. Consequently Wesley saw it as his task to supply their 'grand defect' by pointing out what reason could and could not do.[104]

2.5.6. The Success of Analytical Reason

Within these two extremes there were different gradations in the utilization of analytical reason. To begin with, reason can assist in the 'affairs of common life', such as directing servants on how to do their work, directing the 'husbandman' when to plough, sow, and reap. It can also direct the painter, the 'statuary', the musician to excel.[105] Of course the clergy should have, 'a good understanding, a clear apprehension, a sound judgment, and a capacity of reasoning with some closeness[...]'.[106] To all this Wesley would add,

> To ascend higher still, it is certain reason can assist us in going through the whole circle of arts and sciences: of grammar, rhetoric, logic, natural and moral philosophy, mathematics, algebra, metaphysics. It can teach whatever the skill or industry of man has invented for some thousand years. It is absolutely necessary for the due discharge of the most important offices, such as are those of magistrates, whether of an inferior or superior rank; and those of subordinate or supreme governors, whether of states, provinces, or kingdoms.[107]

Furthermore, analytical reason could help provide religion with an understanding of its Scriptural foundation and to help in constructing a 'superstructure' (Wesley's word and one also used by Browne) for the Christian system.[108] All this amounted to a scale of

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[104] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 589; cf. Browne, Procedure (1728), p. 50.

[105] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 590-91.

[106] 'An Address to the Clergy' (1756), in, Works, X, 481.

[107] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 591.

[108] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 592; cf. Browne, Procedure (1728), p. 2. For a completely different usage of the word see, 'Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity', No. 31, v. 6.

ascent within the scale of assent in which there was a gradation based on the utilization and utility- i.e. the use, and usefulness- of reason.

Reason can also serve as 'natural religion', or the 'religion of nature' as he called it. For Wesley, this was 'natural reason, unassisted by revelation'.[109] Warburton, the Lord Bishop of Gloucester, had accused Wesley of being an enemy to natural religion. Wesley's response was,

> What does your lordship mean by 'natural religion'? A *system of principles*? But I mean by it, in this place, *men's natural manners*. These certainly 'flow from their *natural passions and appetites*', with that degree of *reason* which they have. And this, in other instances, is not contemptible; though it is not sufficient to teach them true religion.[110]

Wesley knew reason had a role to play in natural religion, but that it was not the exclusive element of it. More shall be made of Wesley's understanding of natural religion in later chapters. For now, suffice it to say that what is described above is essentially an anthropological view of natural religion in which reason qualified 'a system of principles', 'natural manners', and 'natural passions and appetites'. Yet, these were a 'faint and distant resemblance of Christian' virtue.[111]

All these descriptions could fairly describe the moral law, none of which was sufficient to replace revelation in Wesley's scheme of 'true religion'.[112] One is not saved by either reason, or even love, but by faith in the merits of Christ's death alone. Wesley knew that to many people there would be nothing more unreasonable than this.[113] The primacy of faith is what prevented Wesley's view of reason and natural religion from becoming full blown deism.

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[109] BEW, XVIII, 185 (1737).

[110] 'A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Gloucester' (1763), BEW, XI, 502.

[111] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 54.

[112] Hendricks, 'John Wesley and Natural Theology', WTJ, 18(1983)2, 7-17.

[113] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 53.

2.5.7. The Limits of Analytical Reason

Yet, within this process Wesley knew that reason, or logic, had its limits. In spite of our reason everyone is still ignorant, only in different areas. In spite of reason's use in metaphysics, after all is said and done we still know little about God and God's 'essential attributes' of omnipresence, omniscience, and eternity. Displaying at least some knowledge of Newton on this point,[114] Wesley wrote,

> The omnipresence or immensity of God Sir Isaac Newton endeavours to illustrate by a strong expression, by terming infinite space 'the sensorium of the Deity'. And the very heathens did not scruple to say, 'All things are full of God'- just equivalent with his own declaration, 'Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?'[...]But in the meantime, what conception can we form either of his eternity or immensity? Such knowledge is too wonderful for us: we cannot attain unto it.[115]

Not even the intellectual excitement and optimism of a Newtonian account of the universe could explain it all. If anything, it only illuminated greater ignorance. We cannot actually know much of the works of God, such as the 'fixed stars', the 'Milky Way', 'comets', the precise distance to the sun, or 'that wonderful body, *light*'.[116] In his sermon, 'The Imperfections of Human Knowledge' (1784), one sees line after line in which Wesley displays reference after reference to science, philosophy, and literature, which amounts to the makings of a Wesleyan theology of 'culture'.[117] But he uses these references to human accomplishment and

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[114] Wesley read Newton's Opticks (1704 ed.) in 1726, Green, Young Wesley (1963), p. 292.

[115] BEW, II, 570 and see note 8 for comments on 'the sensorium of the Deity'. It is more likely that Wesley's knowledge of Newton's concept of the 'sensorium of the Deity' came from reading 'the famous controversy between Drs. Clarke and Leibnitz' (JWJ, VI, 63). For that, see Samuel Clarke, The Works (1738), (New York: Garland Publishing, 1978), IV, 587-95. Cf. the *anima mundi* reference in 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 51 and note 2, '[...]vastam/ Mens agitans molem et magno se corpore miscens. "The all informing soul Which spreads through the vast mass and moves the whole"', from Virgil, Aeneid, vi. 726-7.

[116] 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 572; cf. 'Of the Gradual Improvement of Natural Philosophy', NP (1777), I, 21, V, 235; also in Works, XIV, 487, 488. Cf. Gregory Nanzianzen, 'The Second Theological Oration', XXX.

[117] Outler, BEW, II, 568.

knowledge only to demonstrate human ignorance. The quintessential 'imperfection of human knowledge' is illustrated by the Socratic paradox of the more we know, the more we know that we do not know.[118]

> My knowledge did not heighten my opinion of myself: for the more I knew, the more I knew my own ignorance. I was more and more convinced, that I was very ignorant, even in what I thought I knew. And I found an infinite latitude of things, which I did not know at all. Yea, the farther I waded into knowledge, the deeper still I found it.[119]

For Wesley, knowledge was an abyss with a bottom untouched by the human mind.

Although rational religion is relational religion, which can be expressed in the word 'love', analytical reason cannot produce either faith, hope, or love.[120] And, as he said to Joseph Benson, head of Kingswood school, 'an ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge.'[121] While their concepts were reasonable, reason cannot produce, or become a substitute for, 'true religion', which consists of love of God and neighbour. Faith alone is capable of this.

Neither can reason convict of sin. That is to say, one does not gain knowledge of sin through reason. As will be seen in chapter four, only the Holy Spirit working in conjunction with the moral Law is capable of doing that. 'The ordinary method of God is to convict sinners by the law, and that only.'[122] The truth of this is confirmed in a corollary way through the 'witness of the Spirit', 'not only by the experience of the children of God[...]but by all those who are convinced of sin, who feel the wrath of God abiding on

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[118] e.g. Plato, 'Euthydemus', in, Dialogues (1937).

[119] NP (1777), V, 231; cf. Locke, Essay, I.i.6, 'Tis of great use to the Sailor to know the length of his Line, though he cannot with it fathom all the depths of the Ocean.' Cf. JWL, IV, 286 (1765); also Wesley in London Magazine (1765), 28, 'When I was young I was sure of everything. In a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as before. At present I am hardly not half so sure of anything but what God has revealed to men.'

[120] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 593-99.

[121] JWL, V, 110 (1760).

[122] 'The Law Established through Faith, I' (1750), BEW, II, 23.

them.'[123] Yet, 'Without this conviction we cannot but account the blood of the covenant *as a common thing*[...]'.[124] Reason cannot produce, 'a deep conviction of our utter *helplessness*[...]', or a genuine sense of repentance.[125] There is need for an experience of revelation to show us our sin and the grace for forgiveness. More of this will be said below.

2.5.8. The Failure of Analytical Reason

All this served to indicate that reason can only bring one so far in the quest for the eternal, the spiritual, and the unseen.

> What then will your reason do here? How will it pass from things natural to spiritual? From the things that are seen to those that are not seen? From the visible to the invisible world? What a gulf is here! By what art will reason get over the immense chasm? This cannot be till the Almighty come in to your succour, and give you that faith you have hitherto despised. Then, upborne as it were on eagles' wings, you shall soar away into the regions of eternity, and your enlightened reason shall explore even 'the deep things of God', God himself 'revealing them to you by his Spirit'.[126]

Here Wesley marked the limits of human reason by a great divide which cannot be crossed without faith, revelation, and the Holy Spirit. Together, however, enlightened reason could explore the depths of God. The chasm was created by the limits of reason, limits which were more than anything else imposed upon human experience by original sin, a doctrine which was eventually found lacking in Locke. On one hand, Wesley's views on rationalism limited by original sin led him to conclude that 'by the very constitution of their nature the wisest of men 'know' but 'in part'.'[127] On the other hand he would say, 'he that would enlighten the

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[123] 'The Witness of the Spirit, II' (1767), BEW, I, 291.
[124] 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 351.
[125] 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 352; also, 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 477-81.
[126] 'An Earnest Appeal Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 57.
[127] 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 569.

head must cleanse the heart'.[128] In Wesley's view an intellect sanctified from original sin was a fuller one.

2.5.9. Assent to Revelation

While reason is less susceptible to deception, and consequently more reliable than experience, the most reliable of all was 'Divine Revelation'. This is so because, as Wesley confidently asserted, 'God can neither deceive, nor be deceived.'[129] Presupposing such confident assertions in the doctrine of revelation is the character and nature of God, the subject of eternal reason. God does not lie. Upon this simple truth from the doctrine of God, revelation rests as the surest form of knowledge available.[130]

2.5.10. Assent on the Basis of Analytical Reason

At one point, Wesley held to a rather clinical, and Lockian definition of faith being nothing but assent on rational grounds alone. He said in a letter to his mother,

> Faith is a species of belief, and belief is defined, an assent to a proposition upon rational grounds. Without rational grounds there is therefore no belief, and consequently no faith[...]. I call faith an assent upon rational grounds because I hold divine testimony to be the most reasonable of all evidence whatever. Faith must necessarily at length be resolved into reason. God is true, therefore what he says is true. *He* hath said this; therefore this is true.[131]

Although this definition appears to have been taken from Richard Fiddes, it bears evidence of a Lockian influence. Brantley was correct when he said Wesley had taken this definition as the only true one.[132]

However, after an exchange of letters with his mother he admitted, 'I had been under a mistake in adhering to that definition of faith which Dr. Fiddes

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[128] 'The Wisdom of Winning Souls' (1731), BEW, IV, 313.

[129] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178; cf. 'Seek First the Kingdom' (1725), BEW, IV, 220, 'God[...]can neither deceive others nor be himself deceived, since he is a true as well as an all-knowing Being.'

[130] BEW, XXV, 175 (1725).

[131] BEW, XXV, 175 (1725); cf. BEW, I, 418.

[132] Brantley, Locke, Wesley (1984), p. 27.

sets down as the only true one.'[133] He came to this conclusion after his mother had written to him in response to that definition of faith. She wrote,

> You are somewhat mistaken in your notion of faith. All faith is an assent, but all assent is not faith. Some truths are self-evident, and we assent to them because they are so. Others, after a regular and formal process of reason, by way of deduction from some self-evident principle, gain our assent; and this is not properly faith but science. Some again we assent to, not because they are self-evident, or because we have attained the knowledge of them in a regular method, by a train of arguments, but because they have been revealed to us, either by God or man, and these are the proper objects of faith.[134]

Later on, in November of that same year she wrote again to her son on the matter of faith, saying,

> I think Pearson's definition of divine or saving faith is good, and no way defective.[135] For though the same thing may be an object of faith is revealed, and an object of reason as deducible from rational principles, yet I insist upon it that the virtue of faith, by which through the merits of our Redeemer we must be saved, is an assent to the truth of whatever God hath been pleased to reveal, because he hath revealed it, and not because we understand it. Thus St. Paul, 'By faith we understand that the world was made'- q.d., ['as if he were to say'] rejecting the various conjectures of the heathen, and not resting upon the testimony of natural reason, but relying on the authority of God, we give a full assent to what he hath been pleased to reveal unto us concerning the creation of the world. Now the reason why this faith is required is plain, because otherwise we do not give God the glory of his truth, but prefer our weak and fallible understanding before his eternal word, in that we will believe the one rather than the other.[136]

Mrs. Wesley was clearly trying to guide her son away from Fiddes to other sources in order to understand faith. The purpose was to ground Wesley's understanding of faith as assent on the basis of the doctrine of God and divine revelation, rather than reason.

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[133] BEW, XXV, 186 (1725).
[134] BEW, XXV, 179, (1725).
[135] See Pearson, Exposition of the Creed (1659), pp. 1-9.
[136] BEW, XXV, 183 (1725).

2.5.11. Assent on the Basis of the Nature of God

In response to this Wesley came over to her understanding of faith being an 'assent to what God has revealed, because he has revealed it, and not because the truth of it may be evinced by reason'[137]. The assent of faith to revelation was then based not on rationality but on the attributes of God alone. The principles of divine faith are those, and only those, contained in Scriptures, which Wesley termed, 'standing Revelation',[138] which means, God is known definitively through revelation. The assent of faith to revelation is ultimately on the basis of faith and the work of the Holy Spirit.[139] But what is absent from Locke, but present in Wesley, is not just a doctrine of original sin, but a pneumatology which becomes the ultimate basis of revelation. Ultimately, the truth of revelation is assented to on the basis of the work of the Holy Spirit, and not on reason alone.

Nonetheless, Wesley would still argue strongly that,

> Revelation never contradicts either sense or reason. It may indeed transcend both. But it cannot possibly contradict either, rightly employed about its proper object.[140]

Revelation may transcend sense and reason, which gives it a suprarational quality. For Wesley it was faith, and the Holy Spirit that stood in the gap between revelation and reason. This (along with the axioms that God cannot deceive, or be deceived; and that absolute faith is due to the testimony of God), was for Wesley axiomatic (i.e. 'a proposition which needs not, and cannot, be proved').[141] Wesley knew that reason could only take an individual so far before faith was required. Yet faith was not blind belief in, and/or of

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[137] BEW, XXV, 188.

[138] 'Dives and Lazarus' (1788), BEW, IV, 18.

[139] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 201; 'On Faith' (1791), BEW, IV, 199; 'A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Gloucester' (1763), BEW, XI, 503.

[140] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 179. Cf. Wesley's extraction of Peter Browne's, Procedure (1728) in, NP (1777), 'Of the Improvement of Knowledge by Revelation', V, 210-24, 'Thus has the Gospel-revelation improved the knowledge of mankind[...]'.

[141] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 179.

the uncertain, but in and/or of the most certain, namely the assent of divine faith into a divine revelation. Faith occurs because of the limitations of reason, and its inability to perceive the spiritual world and things eternal. Only faith was capable of doing that, so that for Wesley the act of faith was vision. Faith is seeing God.[142]

2.5.12. Assent on the Basis of Eternal Reason, or Relationality

These two notions of assent on the basis of reason and revelation were still none-the-less faith on the basis of assent. Perhaps because of his understanding of eternal reason, his understanding of living faith was not mere assent on the basis of either reason or revelation. It was faith on the basis of one's desire for a relationship with the Triune God. He said, faith

> is not a barely notional or speculative faith-[...]It is not a bare assent to this proposition, 'Jesus is the Christ;' nor indeed to all the propositions contained in our creed, or in the Old and New Testament. It is not merely 'an assent to any, or all these credible things, as credible'[...]. It is not only 'an assent to divine truth, upon the testimony of God', or 'upon the evidence of miracles'[143] [...]. For all this is not more than a dead faith. The true, living Christian faith, which whosoever hath is 'born of God', is not only an assent, an act of the understanding, but a disposition which God hath wrought in his heart; 'a sure trust and confidence in God that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God'[...]. And earnest desire of that salvation must precede a living faith. [144]

Living faith is saving, evangelical faith, which is preceded by an earnest desire to be reconciled to God. In other words, it is preceded by repentance, and an earnest desire for a saving relationship with God. 'This faith, then, whereby we are born of God, is 'not only a belief of all the articles of our faith, but also a true confidence of the mercy of God, through our Lord

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[142] See, ENNT (1755), John 1.18; 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 46-7; Shimitzu, "Epistemology", p. 182.

[143] Cf. Aquinas, Summa Theologica, II.ii.Q.1.

[144] 'The Marks of the New Birth' (1748), BEW, I, 418-19.

Jesus Christ.'[145] This faith is not based on analytical reason, but on eternal reason- the natures of God and man, 'with the relations necessarily subsisting between them'. Faith based on assent was 'the faith of a demon', or cold, dead orthodoxy. Living faith is not just orthodoxy, but the genuine experience of Divine and human relationality, provided by the new birth. Experimental relationality grounded in the eternal reason of the Triune God was Wesley's understanding of evangelical faith. More about the nature of faith will be said in chapter five, when faith is appropriated in context of the order of salvation.

Admittedly, in his understanding of faith, Wesley relied upon empirical inclinations to develop his idea of 'spiritual senses'.[146] With the eyes of faith one sees things unseen, so that in fact, through faith one is able to rest upon the object of belief as certain knowledge. But because God's revelation (for Wesley, this was Scripture) is more reliable than either sensation or reason, faith stands at the top of the 'scale of assent' as being the most certain.

From these 'degrees of probability' Wesley constructed a 'scale of assent', which was derived from Aldrich.

> If, therefore, we were to make a sort of scale of assent, it might consist of the following steps:
> 1. Human faith, an assent to a doubtful proposition: 2. Opinion, to a probable: 3. What we may term sentiment, and assent to a certain proposition: 4. Science, to a certain and evident conclusion: 5. Intelligence, to a self-evident axiom: 6. Divine faith, to a Divine revelation.[147]

These became the epistemological basis for his corollary use of Scripture, reason, and experience. Among the sources of knowledge, nothing is more certain than the Divine revelation in Scripture, after that, reason, followed by experience.[148] From this Wesley concluded,

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[145] 'The Marks of the New Birth' (1748), BEW, IV, 419.
[146] Heizenrater, Mirror and Memory (1989), p. 145.
[147] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178. Cf. Wesley's extraction of Peter Browne's, Procedure (1728), in NP (1777), 'Of the different Kinds of Knowledge and Evidence', V, 192-210.
[148] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178.

'In what we know or perceive, there are various degrees of rest, according to the various evidence, certainty, or probability.'[148] The degree of reliability proceeded from experience/sensation, to intelligence/reason, then to faith/revelation, in that order. When Wesley said that the doctrine of original sin would be explained according to Scripture, reason, experience, he was employing an epistemology based upon 'scale of assent' that proceeded in degrees from experience, to reason, and then to revelation.

From this section there are several important points to be remember for later use. First is the concept of eternal reason as the nature of God and the nature of humanity, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them. This made Wesley's understanding of the personhood as being essentially relational in nature. The relational nature of Christianity is grounded in eternal reason. In this sense relational religion is rational religion. The second point to be remember regards that of revelation. It will be later shown how a general or universal revelation is essential to Wesley's understanding of actual sin, and how this universal revelation is provided, not through innate knowledge, but through prevenient grace, which is a work of the Holy Spirit. The third aspect to be remembered is the importance of experience as the basis of the scale of assent. Experience was for Wesley the foundation of all knowledge and essential to his concept of personhood. For that reason it merits a more detailed study, which is what we shall do next.

2.6. Experience and the Concept of Personhood

There is no doubt that Wesley stressed experience a great deal in his theology. Clapper was correct when he said that for Wesley, 'Experience can confirm doctrine but not be the source of it.'[150] There is a difference between saying experience is an epistemological source of knowledge and saying it is a source of theological doctrine. This is the difference between Wesley and

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[148] 'Logic', Works, XIV, 178.
[150] Clapper, Wesley on Religious Affections (1989), p. 159.

Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher attempted to ground theology not just in metaphysics but in experience, and the 'consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or[...]of being in relation with God.'[151] While experience followed Scripture, and reason in order of reliability, it was given a place of prominence in Wesley's theology, and a place of prominence in twentieth century Wesley scholarship.[152] In the twenty-eighth Hartley Lecture, Wilkinson even went so far as to say religious experience is a Methodist fundamental.[153] Bett has even argued that Methodism's greatest theological contribution was grounding 'religion and theology in the fact of experience'.[154] Williams was also right when he pointed out that Wesley stressed experience in order to combat the cold formalism of religion.[155] Baker acknowledged that experience played an important role in Wesley's doctrine of Christian Perfection.[156] Experience indeed deserves special consideration.

2.6.1. Sensory and Religions Experience

For Wesley, the nature of experience was two fold-sensory and religious.[157] Since there is no innate knowledge either one's natural senses, or one's spiritual senses must provide one with all knowledge.[158] The

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[151] Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, (1976), I, §4.

[152] e.g., Clapper, Wesley on Religious Affections (1989); Matthews, in, Wesleyan Theology Today (1985), pp. 406-13. Of course the interest in experience in regards to Christian doctrine is not confined to Wesleyans, as can be seen in the theological reconstructionists. See, Matthews, God In Christian Thought and Experience (1942), who similarly held to the three sources of theology being experience, Scripture, and reason. The reconstructionists (of which Matthews, God in Christ is an example) maintained that scripture derived its authority from experience, p. 114.

[153] Wilkinson, Religious Experience (1928). This includes a critique of Schleiermacher using the Wesleyan doctrine of experience, which he defines as, 'an awareness of God giving assurance as the self seeks harmonious relations with Him[...]and mediated through Christ', p. 76.

[154] Bett, The Spirit of Methodism (1937), p. 131.

[155] Williams, Wesley's Theology Today (1960), pp. 32-3. Cf. JWL, VII, 47 (1781), 'The theory of religion he certainly has. May God give him the living experience of it.'

[156] Baker, A Charge To Keep (1954), p. 106.

[157] Outler has suggested a connection between the two, BEW, I, 276.

[158] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 56.

concept of 'natural senses' was strongly grounded in an empirical epistemology, while 'spiritual senses' were concerned with things such as '*inward feelings*' (or being inwardly conscious of the operations of the Spirit),[159] and assurance (which has often been called 'immediate inspiration'),[160] both of which presupposed revelation made possible by the 'eyes of faith'. 'And till you have these internal senses, till the eyes of your understanding are opened, you can have no apprehension of divine things, no idea of them at all.'[161] The slate of spiritual experience will remain blank. Sensation and revelation were ultimately for Wesley the two sources of one's experience. At the moment our concern is not so much Wesley's understanding of religious experience (as important as that may be) as it is his understanding of sensory experience, the role it played in his epistemology, and perhaps more importantly for our discussion, the role it played in his understanding of personhood. It is Wesley's concept of personhood that will play a significant part in his understanding of sin.

2.6.2. Wesley's Denial of Innate Knowledge

The prominence of experience in Wesley's epistemology was largely due to his denial of innate knowledge. He said, 'I think that point, "that we have no innate principles," is abundantly proved, and cleared from all objections that have any shadow of strength'.[162] The

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[159] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 139-40; 'A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Rutherford' (1768), BEW, IX, 382-3.

[160] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 171. Wesley said the term 'inspiration' could be interchanged with 'assistance'.

[161] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 57.

[162] 'Remarks upon Locke's, "Essay"', Works, XIII, 455. Also, 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion', BEW, XI, 56, 'And seeing our ideas are not innate, but must all originally come from our senses[...]'. But, cf. 'On Obedience to Parents', BEW, III, 361-62, 'But it is allowed on all hands, if there be any practical principles naturally implanted on the soul [i.e. innate], that 'we ought to honour our parents' will claim this character almost before any other.' Contrary to Outler, (BEW, II, 589 n.), there is a big difference between Wesley, and Watts, who argued, 'there is a sense,

(continued...)

denial of innate knowledge separated him from the likes of Malebranche, John Norris (two sources of influence on his epistemology already mentioned above), the Cambridge Platonists, Leibniz, even Isaac Watts et al., who held to views of innate knowledge.[163] Ralph Cudworth, a Cambridge Platonist, had said this Aristotelian notion had done more to promote atheism than anything else.[164] Wesley obviously did not think so, in spite of his sympathies with Cudworth and other Cambridge Platonists on other points.[165]

In the sermon, 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), Wesley declared,

> For many ages it has been allowed by sensible men, *Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuit prius in sensu*- nothing is in the understanding which was not first perceived by some of the senses.[166]

This quote is frequently taken as Wesley's endorsement of Locke's empiricism with its doctrine of 'tabula rasa'.[167] For example, Brantley cites the same passage, applies to Locke, and concludes, 'These sentences epitomize the main point in Book 1 of the Essay and indeed in the Essay as a whole.'[168] The quote does perhaps summarize Locke's position, however, it is not

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[162](...continued)
wherein our first ideas of some things may be said to be innate[...]' (Watts, Logic, I.iii.1.).

[163] See, Outler, BEW, III, 361-2 n. Armstrong, 'Cambridge Platonists and Locke on Innate Ideas', Journal of the History of Ideas. 30(1969), 187-202; Harris, 'Leibniz and Locke on Innate Ideas', Ratio 16(1974), 226-42. Adams, 'The Locke-Leibniz Debate', in, Innate Ideas (1975), pp. 37-67; Adams, 'Where Do Our Ideas Come From?- Descartes vs. Locke', in Innate Ideas (1975), pp. 71-87.

[164] Cudworth, Intellectual System (1845 edition, III, 401), in Gibson, Locke's Theory of Knowledge (1917), p. 238.

[165] Wesley had extracted Cudworth's sermon, 'The Life of Christ, the Pith and Kernel of all Religion: A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at Westminster, March 31, 1647' in, CL 17(1752). See Green, Bibliography (1896), pp. 78-9. Also, English, 'The Cambridge Platonists in Wesley's Christian Library', PWHS 36(1968), 161-8.

[166] 'On the Discoveries of Faith', BEW, IV, 29; 'Walking by Sight, Walking by Faith,' IV, 51. For other references found in the sermons, see BEW, I, 409; II, 285, 288-89, IV, 21, 30, 50-51, 170, 200. Note also, 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion', BEW, XI, 56. Cf. JWL, VI, 229 (1776), and Wesley's extraction of Brown's, Procedure (1728), in NP (1777) V, 172.

[167] Locke, Essay, II.i.2. Cf. Aristotle, 'On the Soul', $429^{b}29$-$430^{a}31$.

[168] Brantley, Locke, Wesley (1984), p. 6.

from Locke. Given Locke's dislike of the Schoolmen it is ironic that it is actually a maxim derived from Aristotle, quoted by Roger Bacon,[169] and then again by Peter Browne.[170] The denial of innate knowledge was not unique to Locke, and one cannot label a philosophy 'Lockian' simply because it does. One must question whether or not Wesley indeed needed Locke to deny innate knowledge. He appeared more comfortable quoting Browne, who was in turn quoting the Scholastics, than quoting Locke on the matter to make this point. Given Locke's disdain of the Schoolmen, to quote one in support of the denial of innate knowledge could possibly be seen as something of an insult to Locke.

One must be careful in calling Wesley a Lockian simply because he joined Locke in denying innate ideas. There were profound differences between the two. There had to be, otherwise Wesley could not hold to a doctrine of original sin with any credibility. It was quite possible for the epistemology of Locke's Essay to make the notion of original sin 'altogether unintelligible', making Augustinianism as doubtful as innateness.[171] Locke's own doctrine of 'tabula rasa' led him to conclusions about original sin that rejected Augustinianism and approximated Pelagianism, which, as Spellman has pointed out, was the position of the Latitudinarians.[172] The wonder is not why Locke denied original sin but how he held onto to a doctrine of original sin for so long. He denied the guilt of Adam's sin, and that Adam's sin entailed the necessity of sinning through any moral predisposition. What is

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[169] This quote appears to have come from Roger Bacon, Oper hactenus indedita Rogeri Baconi. Bacon's version was, 'nichil est in intellectu quin prius fuerit in sensu', in Kretzmann, CHLMP, p. 449 note 33. The 'nichil' appears to be a misprint.

[170] 'On the Discoveries of Faith', BEW, IV, 29 and note 1, 'Another scholastic maxim derived from Aristotle, De Anima (On the Soul), III.7 [431ª], and discussed at length by Aquinas in Summa Theologica, Pt. I,Q.84, Arts. 1,7.' But Browne, Procedure (1728), p. 55. Cf. Hobbes, Leviathan, I.i.

[171] Spellman, John Locke and the Problem of Depravity (1988), p. 155 and note 1, citing Hatrell's correspondence to Locke (25 March 1695; 3 June 1695).

[172] This is the conclusion of Spellman, John Locke and the Problem of Depravity (1988); also in 'Locke and the Latitudinarian Perspective on Original Sin', RevIntPhil, 42(1988), 215-28.

interesting is that this position is picked up and developed by John Taylor in his attack on original sin. So that when Wesley in turn attacked Taylor, he was in fact attacking a full blown development of Locke's doctrine of original sin.

One thing that kept Wesley's denial of innate knowledge, and the consequential prominence of experience in his theology, from denying original sin is found in the constitutive nature of personhood as the subject of experience. Locke's notion of personhood was rooted in a mind/body duality. Wesley's was in a soul/body duality, with the soul being the receptacle of the image of God. Consequently, when one discusses Wesley's soul/body duality one must include within that concept the understanding that the soul is the receptacle of the image of God. This assumption will be made in the all the discussions relating to soul/body duality found below. For Locke, however, the mind served as the 'tabula rasa'. For Wesley, the 'tabula rasa' was ultimately the soul, blank of knowledge, but not entirely blank of the image of God. But, because the soul was infected with original sin (which was for Wesley the lost moral, or relational image, and the marred natural and political images), experience and even reason are infected by it also. Wesley's understanding of the soul, particularly as it related to the image of God, introduced a crucial departure from Locke over the essential nature of personhood as the subject of experience. However, our discussion of the soul will be covered in two different sections. Later, the role the soul plays in image of God, and original sin will be discussed. At the moment, our discussion will be concerned only with the soul's role in epistemology. From here proceed many implications for the doctrine of sin.

2.6.3. Locke's Mind/Body Duality

For Locke, essential to personhood was a consciousness of self[173] involved in a mind/body duality.[174] The

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[173] Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.26.
[174] Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.9.

word 'duality' is used here in place of 'dualism' simply because 'dualism' suggests an ontological antagonism between the natures. An example of a 'dualism' in natures would have been Lactantius, who advocated 'two substances equally opposed to one another- body and soul[...]one is firm and eternal, the other frail and mortal.'[175] 'Duality' is meant to suggest the two constitutive natures of personhood which owe their existence to both material and immaterial realities. For both Locke and Wesley, neither of their dualities were so much in opposition, as they were in apposition.

Locke defined 'man' as,

> nothing truly but a complex *Idea* of Properties, united together in one sort of Substances: Yet there is scarce any Body in the use of these Words, but often supposes each of those names to stand for a thing having the real Essence, on which those Properties depend.[176]

From this formal definition he began his duality of mind/body when he wrote, 'Socrates asleep, and Socrates awake, is not the same person; but his soul when he sleeps, and Socrates the man, consisting of body and soul, when he is waking, are two persons[...]'.[177] He went on to say,

> If the same *Socrates* waking and sleeping do not partake of the same *consciousness*, *Socrates* waking and sleeping is not the same Person. And to punish *Socrates* waking, for what sleeping *Socrates* thought, and waking *Socrates* was never conscious of, would be no more of Right, than to punish one Twin for what his Brother-Twin did[...].[178]

For Locke, consciousness is what provided the continuity of personality, and personhood. McIntyer has made the point that his idea of the 'conscious' must be understood in its historical context, which gave the term a different meaning then. She has suggested that it be given an interpretation of continuity of consciousness

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[175] Lactantius, 'A Treatise on the Anger of God', xv.

[176] Locke, Essay, III.x.18; cf. Wesley, 'Remarks upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, VIII, 462.

[177] Locke, Essay, II.i.11.

[178] Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.19. Cf. Aristotle, 'On Sleep', 454ª2-11.

as derived from memory.[179] Without consciousness there can be no memory. While Locke held to body/soul duality, such a view ultimately concludes that persons do not consist of substance, a conclusion the likes of Schreck have deemed inadequate.[180] Locke denied the validity of unconscious knowledge, seeing it as an oxymoron. If one thinks, one knows *that* one is thinking and *what* one is thinking.[181] Although he never used the word 'unconscious', implicit to this assertion is a 'clear conception of a doctrine of the unconscious mind two centuries before Freud.'[182] Socrates awake, and Socrates asleep are two persons, one conscious, the other unconscious. Unconsciousness provided a discontinuity of personhood. Where culpability for an act was concerned, consciousness meant guilt, and unconsciousness meant innocence.

Consciousness of one's self, or of one's thoughts was not the only criterion for personhood. The story of a 'rational' parrot who carried on a conversation in Portuguese with Prince Maurice illustrated another one. Locke used it to raise questions about the nature of personhood. Does reason alone make one a person? If so, Maurice's parrot was human. In reaction to the parrot story Locke concluded that the human form as well as the immaterial spirit go into the making of the same person.[183] A person was a conscious mind aware of its thoughts, yes. But personhood also consisted of a body, which Maurice's parrot did not have. Locke was

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[179] McIntyer, 'Locke on Personal Identity: A Re-examination'. Philosophy Research Archives. 3(1977), no. 1103. For a conflicting opinion see Hughes, 'Personal Identity: A Defence of Locke', Philosophy, 50(1975), 169-87, who argued that translating 'consciousness' as 'memory' is incorrect.

[180] Winkler, 'Locke on Personal Identity', Journal of the History of Philosophy, 29(1991)2, 201-26. Schreck, 'Locke's Account of Personal Identity', Gnosis, Dec (1990), 89-100. See also, Unger, Identity, Consciousness and Value (1990) who attempts to separate the issue of personal identity from metaphysics in order to locate it in phenomenology. For a fuller discussion of the problem of identity see, Mackie, Problems from Locke (1982), pp. 173-203. For an interesting analysis of Gulliver, the Honyhnhnms, and the Yahoos using Locke's concept of personhood see, Wertz, 'Some Correlations between Swift's Gulliver and Locke on Personal Identity', JThought, 10(1975), 262-70.

[181] Locke, Essay, I.ii.5.

[182] Priest, The British Empiricists, pp. 55-6.

[183] Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.8, 21; cf. IV.iv.16.

mystified as to the relationship between mind and body, particularly as to how the mind was able move or stop a body.[184] Nonetheless, it took a human mind and a human form to constitute personhood.

What is obviously missing is any concept of the soul as a constitutive part of personhood.[185] Neither did he consider the question of the image of God, which is mentioned nowhere in the Essay. Locke did not deny that the soul existed, although he doubted whether one is able to prove the immateriality of the soul.[186] If it were material, it would somehow have to be associated with the body. What he did deny was that soul could always be thinking, in other words, that the soul was always conscious.[187] Kemerling has pointed out that this rejection of Descartes' claim that the essence of the soul is an inseparable quality of thought, and that the soul must always be thinking renewed the nefarious suggestion that the human body might be a matter created with the power to think.[188] Consequently, Locke's understanding of the soul bordered on materialism, and the absence of the concept of the image of God indicates he was less concerned with theological concepts and more concerned with philosophical ones.

2.6.4. Wesley's Soul/Body Duality

Wesley did not quibble with how Locke generally defined the word 'man'.[189] But he did differ as to the constitutive nature of 'man'. Locke's mind/body duality is in stark contrast to Wesley's understanding of personhood consisting of a soul/body duality.

Outler placed Wesley within the Platonic tradition at this point.[190] Aristotle could also be added. But this association of Wesley with a Platonic/Aristotelian

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[184] Locke, Essay, II.xxiii.28.
[185] Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.15.
[186] Locke, Essay, IV.iii.6.
[187] Locke, Essay, II.i.9-15.
[188] Kemerling, 'Locke on the Essence of the Soul'. Southern Journal of Philosophy. 17(1979), 455-64.
[189] 'Remarks on Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 462.
[190] See, 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 133 note 34. Outler carelessly referred to it there as a mind/body dualism, after elsewhere referring to it as a soul/body dualism. There is a difference.

tradition of a body/soul duality must be qualified. For Plato, all souls were created alike and were differentiated only after becoming incarnate. Plato also taught that the same soul could go through several incarnations in human and animal form.[191] As Zizioulas has noted, 'This makes it impossible for a particular soul to acquire a distinct "personality" of its own on the basis of a particular body'.[192] As for Aristotle, he had no concept of resurrection, so the soul departed from the body at death and survived only as the 'mind'.[193] Zizioulas concluded from this that for Aristotle,

> the person proves to be a logically impossible concept precisely because the soul is indissolubly united with the concrete and 'individual': a man is a concrete individuality; he endures, however, only for as long as his psychosomatic union endures- death dissolves the concrete 'individuality' completely and definitively'.[194]

With this qualification in mind it could still be argued that the general concept of a body/soul duality placed Wesley into the Platonic/Aristotelian traditions, which were followed by Descartes, Malebranche, T. Taylor, James Keill, Samuel Pike, and Robert Bolton, just to name a few.[195] His sermons especially reflected this duality.[196]

For Wesley the body existed in union with a soul that was made in the image of the Triune God. Eventually, as it will be seen in chapter three, Wesley came to understand this Triune image of God as consisting of moral, natural, and political aspects. Because of original sin, the moral image was lost, while the

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[191] Plato, 'Timaeus', 41[d] ff.; 'Phaedo' 249[b]; 'Republic' 618[a].
[192] Zizioulas, Being as Communion (1985), p. 28 and notes.
[193] Aristotle, 'On the Soul', 414[a]4-28, 415[a]28-67.
[194] Zizioulas, Being as Communion (1985), p. 28.
[195] See, 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 133 note 34.
[196] 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 22-5; also 'Awake, Thou That Sleepest' (by CW, 1742), I, 145; 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), II, 129-30, 133-4; 'Heaviness Through Manifold Temptation' (1760), II, 225; 'On the Trinity' (1775), II, 382-83; 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), II, 405-6; 'The General Deliverance' (1781), II, 438-9; 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), IV, 576; 'On Patience' (1784), III, 170; 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), IV, 164-7; 'Death and Deliverance' 1725), IV, 214; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), IV, 281-3, 288; 'The Image of God' (1730), IV, 296. See also, ENNT (1755), Matthew 10.28, etc.

natural, and political images were marred. So, when one speaks of Wesley's body/soul duality, one includes in the concept a soul in which the moral image is void, while the natural and political images are marred.

But the image of God is not to be confused with innate knowledge. Because there is no innate knowledge, the soul comes into the world as a blank slate. The denial of innate knowledge was what separated Wesley from the Platonic tradition, which generally held a view of innate knowledge, and placed him in an Aristotelian (as opposed to a more narrowly and more inaccurately defined Lockian) one, which generally denied innate knowledge. The image of God did not entail an innate knowledge of God. For Wesley this equally meant we are born atheists, not just blank slates. No one is born with an innate knowledge of God.[197]

As a blank slate the soul is an immaterial, thinking substance recording ideas, and deriving knowledge from those ideas.[198] The soul has only the senses to do this. As imperfect as our bodies are, 'the soul cannot dispense with its service[...]. For an embodied spirit cannot form one thought but by the meditation of its bodily organs'.[199] But while the soul perceives by the senses, because it is immaterial it cannot be perceived by the senses, only by faith, as faith alone is capable of perceiving the immaterial world.[200]

The union of these two natures, one material, the other immaterial, is a mysterious union between the empirical and the metaphysical. There is no opposition

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[197] 'On the Education of Children' (1783), BEW, III, 350, 352-53; NP (1777), V, 194-202.

[198] NP (1777), I, 178; 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 30-1; 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 22.

[199] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 405; cf. 'The Good Steward' (1768), BEW, II, 291; 'On the Trinity' (1775), BEW, II, 382.

[200] 'On the Omnipresence of God' (1788), BEW, IV, 45; 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 30. There is one aberrant quote which should be attributed more to carelessness than inconsistency. In, 'Some Thoughts on an Expression of St. Paul, in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, Chapter v., Verse 23', AM (1786), in Works XI, 447-48, Wesley seemed to think the soul was made of 'ethereal or electric fire, the purest of all matter.' But this view was either later corrected or rejected by the sermons above.

between the two as they are naturally joined together,[201] although one cannot precisely tell how such a union actually exists.[202]

> I know not how my body was fashioned there [in the womb]; or when or how my soul was united to it: And it is far easier, in speaking on so abstruse a subject to pull down, than to build up. I can easily object to any hypothesis which is advanced; but I cannot easily defend any.[203]

He seems to have at least entertained a Cartesian suggestion that the soul is actually located in the pineal gland, but finally rejected it as being unfounded.[204] Ultimately, Wesley saw God as the one responsible for the immaterial acting upon the material in such a way as to result in action.[205] In whatever way they were joined, Wesley was convinced that they were joined together in Adam in perfect harmony. It took sin to introduce the abnormal dissension, or the dysfunctional relationship between flesh and spirit. 'And by sad experience we find that this "corruptible body presses down the soul"'.[206]

Wherever, and however they were joined, he thought the soul controlled every motion of the body but the involuntary motion of lungs, heart, and the circulatory system, which (through 'the providence of the great Creator') is controlled by the brain.[207] Yet in another place he was not certain how the immaterial soul controlled the material body.[208]

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[201] 'The True Original of the Soul', AM 6(1783), 150.

[202] NP (1777), I, 178; IV, 115; cf. BEW, IV, 283-4, 289.

[203] DOS, Works, IX, 334-35.

[204] 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 576 note 34; 'What is Man?' (1787), BEW, IV, 22; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 283-4, 289. It is a thought he credits to Descartes in, NP (1777), I, 52; V, 252 (cf. Descartes, Passions of the Soul, I.30-31). Also see, 'Of the Action of God and Creatures', AM (1786), 276-7, where he attempts to explain how the immaterial soul acts upon the material body in a more metaphysical way.

[205] 'Of the Action of God and Creatures' AM (1786), 276-7.

[206] It is derived from Wisdom of Solomon 9.15 in, 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 405; also in 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW II, 130 (on Wesley's use of the Apocrypha see note 18), 135; 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 165, 166; 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 298.

[207] 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 23; NP (1777), I, 82.

[208] 'On The Trinity' (1775), BEW, II, 383.

Yet, because the soul controls the body death occurs when the soul leaves the body.[209] Of this one may be certain. But when is that? Wesley's search for a satisfactory answer to this question anticipated the quandary and discussions of modern medical ethics. Is it the case that, *'Nullus spiritus, nulla vita*- 'Where there is no breath, there is no life'?'[210] Is it when the heart stops beating? Is it when the body grows stiff? His conclusion was ultimately, 'in many cases God only can tell the moment of that separation.'[211] But when the separation occurs,

> The animal machine is like a clock: the wheels whereof may be in ever so good order, the mechanism compleat [sic] in every part, and wound up to the full pitch; yet without some impulse communicated to the pendulum, the whole continues motionless.[212]

But the soul was more to Wesley than, as Ryle put it, just a 'ghost in a machine', controlling, regulating, and even terminating its mechanical functions. It was an eternal (in the 'a parte post' sense, or 'the eternity which is to come'), but not pre-existent, creation of God.[213] This means the soul has no prior existence to the soul/body duality. Once soul and body are inexplicably joined together, the soul is where one finds the image of the Triune God; it is where one finds the lost moral, and the marred natural, and political images of God; it is where one finds understanding, liberty, and will; and where one finds an explanation

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[209] ENNT (1755), 1 Cor. 15.51. Cf. Tertullian, 'A Treatise on the Soul', §§51-53.

[210] 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 25; NP (1777), V, 254.

[211] 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 25.

[212] NP (1777), I, 164, cf. V, 254; 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 25; 'The Good Steward' (1768), BEW, II, 287. Cf. Tertullian, 'A Treatise on the Soul', §51 (who held the soul's corporeality in §5-7).

[213] 'On Eternity', Outler, BEW, II, 361. On the pre-existence of the soul see Plato, 'Timaeus', Dialogues (1937), II, 16-17 (who, on this basis, also entertained the notion of transmigration of the soul, in 'Phaedra', 248-49; 'Meno', 81 ff; Phaedo, 70, 81; 'Republic' 10.617, etc.). It is no surprise that Wesley rejected the pre-existence of the soul as a way to explain original sin (cf. Tertullian, 'A Treatise on the Soul', §27). An example of such an attempt may be seen in Capel Berrow, A Lapse of Human Souls in a State of Pre-Existence, the Only Original Sin (1766). Wesley's rejection of this closes the door for any possibility of 'transmigration' (See Origen, 'Commentary on Matthew', 13.1; Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', 2.23.1-24.4; Tertullian, 'A Treatise on the Soul', §31-33).

for the transmission of original sin. These aspects of the soul will be explored later in relationship to original sin.

2.6.5. Consciousness is not Personal Identity

On the basis of a body/soul duality Wesley rejected Locke's notion that 'consciousness makes personal identity[...]'.[214] He argued,

> Does knowing I exist, make me exist? No; I am before I know I am; and I am the same, before I can possibly know I am the same[...]. 'Person,' says he, 'is a thinking intelligent being.' Is it so?[...]Let none then seek a knot in a bulrush. The case is plain, unless it be puzzled by art. I call Cato the same person all his life, because he has the same soul. I call him the same man, because he has the same body too, which he brought into the world.
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> But what blessed work will Mr. Locke's hypothesis make! If there be no personal identity without consciousness, then Cato is not the same person he was at two months old; for he has no consciousness at all of what he was then. Nay, I have no more consciousness of what I was or did at two years old, than of what Julius Caesar did. But am I not the same person I was then?[...]
>
> Upon the whole, if you take the word 'person' for a thinking intelligent being, it is evident, the same soul, conscious or unconscious, is the same person. But if you take it for the same soul, animating the same human body, (in which sense I have always taken it, and I believe every one else that has not been confounded by metaphysical subtlety,) then you and I and every man living is the same person from the cradle to the grave. And God will accordingly reward every man, or every person[...]according to his own works; and that whether he be conscious of them or not; this will make no manner of difference. What every individual sows here, he will reap in eternity.[215]

In this carefully, and rather well developed argument we see clearly that the irreducible essence of personhood is not rooted in a mind/body duality, consisting of

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[214] 'Remarks upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 458.

[215] 'Remarks upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 458, 459, 460. Cf. Aristotle, 'On the Soul', 412ª. Here Wesley implies a distinction between the conscious and the unconscious, the sleeping and the awake, a distinction he also used as a metaphor to compare those who had experienced the new birth, and those still in their sins, e.g. 'Awake Thou that Sleepest' (1742).

either subjective reflection or awareness. Personhood consists of a soul/body duality, which exists objectively before God. It will later be shown that although persons are fallen, through prevenient grace persons exist not just as objects but as persons in relationship with God. It is the objective and relational existence of persons which constitutes personhood.

Locke's definition of personhood conflicted with, indeed denied, the Wesleyan and traditional Christian idea of the soul.[216] This fundamental difference between Locke and Wesley has been regretfully ignored by scholars who have been quick to label Wesley 'Lockian'. A 'mind' can be taken away either by amnesia or madness, but a soul cannot.[217] The image of God was not derived from empiricism for Wesley.[218] Hence, neither can personhood, as the soul provides its continuity. But because the mind was an immaterial substance to Locke, and because soul was an immaterial substance for Wesley, it can be said that for them both personhood does not equal substance.

2.6.6. Consciousness is Personality

Having started with a body/soul duality, it must be quickly added that sensation, even 'self-consciousness' were important to Wesley's understanding of personality, but not a constitutive part of personhood. A person can be without personality and still be a person. Yet, it is only through self-consciousness that one is able to have knowledge of 'all the faculties of our

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[216] Tennant, 'The Anglican Response to Locke's Theory of Personal Identity', Journal of the History of Ideas, 43(1982), 73-90. See also, Taylor, 'The Relation of the Holy Spirit to the Self', WTJ, 22(1987)2, 84-91, who, while he draws a distinction between mind and brain, fails to make the distinction between a mind/body 'dualism' and a soul/body duality. He nonetheless draws attention to the pneumatological implications on such a view, p. 90.

[217] 'Remarks upon Locke's "Essay"', Works, XIII, 459.

[218] This challenges the assumptions made by Emmett, 'The Image of God and the Ending of Life', The Asbury Theological Journal, 47(1992)1, 53-62, who concluded that the image of God is the basis for valuing human life and the biblical concept of image is dependent upon at least some cognitive function, and if persons are void of cognitive functions, they are void of God's image, and where there is no image one may allow death.

soul[...]'.[219] For Wesley the soul functioned as what some would call 'mind', so that the soul became the seat of experience, and sensation.[220] It could well be said that even for Wesley, 'sensation is generated in the soul through the medium of the body'.[221] Without experience and sensation there is no personality.

To illustrate this, Wesley told an anecdote (even more bizarre than Locke's story about Maurice's parrot) which had circulated through various sources contemporary to Wesley.[222] It involved a toad being discovered in the heart of an oak tree. It was supposed the toad had somehow been enveloped by the oak either when it was planted, or as it grew, and lived there for over a hundred years, in the dark, with no food or water. Wesley reacted in a curious way to the story. He assumed its credibility (although the anecdote itself could have been a test case for the 'epistemology of testimony'), essentially because of the credibility of the story's witnesses, and their number, and remarked,

> We say, 'it had lived'! But what manner of life! How desirable! How enviable[...]. This poor animal had organs of sense; yet it had not any sensation. It had eyes, yet no ray of light ever entered its black abode. From the very first instant of its existence there, it was shut up in impenetrable darkness. It was shut up from the sun, moon, and stars, and from the beautiful face of nature; indeed from the whole visible world, as if it had no being.[223]

The idea that the absence of the presence of sensation is what distinguishes between what is and is not an animal is an Aristotelian one.[224] But Wesley was making an implicit analogy to personhood here, a point that became more obvious when he concluded that being destitute of sensation also meant being destitute of reflection, memory, or imagination, all of which could

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[219] NP (1777), V, 194.

[220] 'What is Man?'(1788), BEW, IV, 22-5.

[221] Aristotle, 'Sense and Sensibilia', 436^{b}6-7.

[222] Outler's genealogy of this story is, as usual, as impeccable as it is entertaining, BEW, IV, 169 note 3.

[223] 'On Living without God' (1790), BEW, IV, 169. Cf. 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 432-3.

[224] Aristotle, 'Sense and Sensibilia', 436^{b}11-13.

be said to be acts of self-consciousness.[225] Reflection, memory, and imagination as acts of consciousness are the records of a person's existence.

He expounded upon the concept of memory a bit more in 'Thoughts on Memory'. There he wrote,

> In simply remembering things, the mind of man appears to be rather passive than active. Whether we will or no, we remember many things which we have heard or seen, said or done; especially if they were attended with any remarkable pleasure or pain. But in reminiscence, or recalling what is past, the mind appears to be active. Most times at least, we may or may not recall them, as we please. Recollection seems to imply something more than simple reminiscence; even the studious collecting and gathering up together all the parts of a conversation or transaction, which had occurred before, but had in some measure escaped from the memory.[226]

As important as memory was to Wesley, his empiricism rejected Plato's notion that ''all human knowledge is nothing but remembering.' Yet certain it is, that, without remembering, we can have but a small share of knowledge.'[227] This brought Wesley in close proximity to Aristotle's notion that experience, not knowledge is the sum of remembered actions.[228] Wesley had to admit, sensory experience is what records life, upon which one may reflect, of which one may have memory, with which one may develop imagination. While none of these actually constitute personhood in and of itself, the processes of reflection, memory, and imagination are what record being, perception, and sensation. Without such a process there can be no record.[229] Without such a record, there is no human personality. As Wesley held no notion of innate experience, without an accumulation of experience, or to have a mind erased of them is to be absent of personality. But, it is the soul as the receptacle of the image of God which provides the

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[225] 'On Living without God' (1790), BEW, IV, 170-71.
[226] 'Thoughts on Memory' (1789), Works, XIII, 480.
[227] 'An Address to the Clergy' (1756), Works, X, 489.
[228] Aristotle, 'Posterior Analytics', $100^{a}3$-6; 'On Memory', $449^{b}1$-$453^{b}10$.
[229] This is the implied methodology in Heitzenrater, Mirror and Memory (1989).

continuity of personhood, with or without memory and personality.

2.6.7. Personhood and Personality

What Wesley did was to separate personality from the identity of personhood. Consciousness may make personality, and personality may be important to personhood, but it does not constitute personhood.[230] Personality is what one has. A person is what one is. This identity consisted of the objective existence of the soul before God. In his critique of Locke, Wesley conceded the reality of the 'conscious' and 'unconscious', but argued it made no difference where the culpability of sin was concerned. 'God will[...]reward every[...]person[...]according to his own works; and that whether he be conscious of them or not; this will make no manner of difference.' According to Wesley's concept of personhood at least, culpability depended on the objective reality of the soul existing before God, whether one was conscious of sin or not. Within the context of developing his concept of personhood Wesley did not want to link culpability of sin with consciousness and personality.

This development in thought has profound implications on Wesley's understanding of personal sin, which he defined as the willful [i.e. volitional in nature] transgression of a known [i.e. cognitive in nature] law of God. In the context of his hamartiology, culpability for sin depended on knowledge of the law (cognition), and will (volition).[231] By making sin contingent on cognition, and volition he kept personal sin on a 'conscious' level, and on the level of personality. While consciousness does not seem to be a constitutive part of his concept of personhood, it does seem to be a constitutive part of his definition of sin. The crucial question is this: Is Wesley's view of personhood consistent with his own understanding of sin? Is his empiricism consistent with his hamartiology? One

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[230] Cf. Joseph Butler, 'Of Personal Identity', in, The Analogy of Reason (1736). Wesley's arguments follow Butler's on this point.

[231] Note particularly Wesley's extraction of Locke on the 'will' in AM, 5(1782), 413-7, 476-8, 528-34, 585-7.

solution could be to say original sin should correspond with Wesley's concept of personhood, or who we are. Actual sin should correspond to his concept of personality, or what we do. Having asked the question we must leave it for now and explore it more fully in chapter four.

3. Summary

This chapter has tried to illustrate the epistemological grounds for Wesley's use of Scripture, reason, and experience. While acknowledging Locke's influence on his epistemology, it has been shown that he was perhaps more influenced by Henry Aldrich (who was in turn influenced by Peter of Spain), and a strand of medieval Aristotelianism, which Wesley defended against Locke. This emerges more clearly when one compares Wesley's 'Compendium of Logic' with his 'Remarks on Locke's Essay'. One significant example of this can be seen in Wesley's 'scale of assent' which involves a different understanding of the relationship between faith, reason, and revelation. Another more specific example may be seen in Wesley's concept of personhood, as an objective existence before God, and the subject of experience. In doing so he separated personality from identity. Wesley and Locke both agreed on the denial of innate knowledge. However in the sermons and several other places Wesley did not quote Locke to do so. The reason is empiricism is older than Locke's Essay. Empiricism alone does not justify calling Wesley Lockian given the profound differences between the two.

From Wesley's doctrine of experience emerged several systematic implications that cannot be fully explored until their appropriate sections below. The issues to be explored are especially: (1) the relational aspect of his understanding of rational religion; (2) the implications his doctrine of the soul has particularly on original sin; (3) the compatibility between Wesley's concepts of the 'conscious' and the 'unconscious', and the culpability of sin, especially personal sin; (4) the importance of revelation to his understanding of actual sin; and (5) the nature of the God who cannot deceive or be deceived.

The issue to be explored next is theodicy. Why did the God who can neither deceive or be deceived, the God of justice and mercy allow evil? How is evil consistent with eternal reason? In short, 'Unde malum?', or, 'Whence came evil?' These sorts of questions must be addressed in order to understood the origin of evil which was for Wesley both a chronological and theological presupposition to original sin.

Chapter Two
'Unde Malum?', or 'Whence Came Evil?'

1. Introduction

In the last chapter we discovered that Wesley's understanding of eternal reason consisted 'of the nature of things: the nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them[...]It finishes all by restoring the due relations between God and man'.[1] Rational religion is relational religion, and consists of God's love for us, and our love for God and neighbour. But Wesley's concept of eternal reason also acknowledged the fact that the relations between God and humanity are estranged and in need of restoration. An attempt to understand why this estrangement is so must not begin straight away with the doctrine of original sin. It must begin on a more fundamental level by asking the question, 'Whence came evil?' The origin of evil is the presupposition to the origin of sin and discloses many doctrinal assumptions.

1.1. Theodicy- The Question of Evil

Epicurus is said to have asked the question, 'What is the cause of evil?' In answering it, he is quoted by Lactantius as having concluded that God,

> either wished to take away evils, and is unable; or He is able, and is unwilling; or He is neither willing nor able, or He is both willing and able, which alone is suitable to God, from what source then are evils? or why does He not remove them?[2]

Here, in what is a deductive argument, it is maintained that the existence of evil is logically inconsistent, and self-contradictory with the Christian belief that God is good, omniscient, and omnipotent.[3] That, in brief, is the issue of theodicy,[4] which appears to place

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[1] BEW, XI, 55.

[2] Lactantius, 'A Treatise on the Anger of God', xiii (ANF, VII, 271); cf. the argument of David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, pt. x.

[3] e.g. Flew, God and Philosophy (1966), p. 48. Also see, Mackie, in, The Philosophy of Religion (1971), p. 92-3.

[4] The etymology of 'theodicy' is derived from the Greek word for God (theos), and justice (dikei). The word appears to have been coined by Leibniz 'in 1697, in a letter to Magliabechi[...]as the title of an intended work' [Merz, Leibniz (1884), p. 101; cf. Hick, Evil and the God of Love (1966), p. 6 n.

the Christian doctrine of God into a 'no win situation'.

Epicurus's question has been used many times by others as a starting place for the issue of theodicy. Marcion had queried, 'Unde malum et quare?'- 'Whence came evil and why?',[5] as had Mani, who was influenced by the ancient Persian, Zoroaster, as well as Gnosticism.[6] Their solution to the dilemma of theodicy, however, was an ontological dualism consisting of two gods, one evil the other good. Wesley had displayed a familiarity with Zoroaster (albeit a limited one),[7] and was undoubtedly familiar with Marcion's query,[8] but his greatest attack was on the 'regular system' of the 'Manichees'.[9]

1.2. Wesley's Interest in Theodicy

There is more evidence than this to indicate Wesley had a career-long interest in theodicy.[10] He often asked, 'Unde malum?' or, 'Whence evil?',[11] all the while maintaining the omnipotence,[12] the omniscience,[13]

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[5] See, Tertullian, Against Marcion, I.ii (ANF, III, 272); cf. Irenaeus, Against Heresies, I.xxvii (ANF, I, 398-9).

[6] See, Augustine, 'Two Souls, Against the Manichaeans' (391-92), VIII (NPNF1, IV, 100-1); 'On the Morals of the Manichaeans' (388), II (NPNF1, IV, 69); 'Confessions' (397-401), III.12 (NPNF1, I, 64); Filoramo, A History of Gnosticism (1990); cf. Methodius [attrib.], 'Concerning Free-Will'.

[7] See JWL, VI, 118-23 (1774).

[8] See, BEW, II, 476 and n.

[9] 'Thoughts Upon Necessity' (1774), Works, X, 457.

[10] See, BEW, XXV, 240-2 (1729), XXV, 258 (1730), XXV, 264-7 (1731); also see AM 3(1780), 604-6, 607-11; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 285; 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 476. A close inspection of Wesley's 'Sermon Register' reveals twenty-seven instances of preaching from this text (1 John 3:8) between 1742 to 1789, leading Outler to conclude, 'This confirms the impression of Wesley's serious preoccupation, both early and late, with the problem of evil, and especially *moral* evil', BEW, II, 471.

[11] e.g. BEW, XXV, 240-2 (1729); BEW, II, 476, 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781); AM 3(1780), 604-6.

[12] e.g. 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, VI' (1748), BEW, I, 589; 'On Divine Providence' (1786), BEW, II, 540-1; 'On the Omnipresence of God' (1788), BEW, IV, 44; 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 62; 'Public Diversions Denounced' (1732), BEW, IV, 320-1; 'Thoughts Upon God's Sovereignty' (1777), Works, X, 361-3.

[13] 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 62.

the justice,[14] and love of God. His first sermon, 'Death and Deliverance' (1725), was essentially an attempt to explore the issue of theodicy. In 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730) he noted, '"Why are sin and its attendant pain in the world?" has been a question ever since the world began[...]'.[15] Throughout his career, by his interest in theodicy, and without any semblance of impiety, Wesley sought to apply these moral categories to God. In doing so he hoped,

> That, to the height of this great argument,
> I may assert eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God with man.[16]

Unlike Leibniz, who (as Barth said), 'at the bottom[...]hardly had any serious interest (and from practical standpoint none at all) in the problem of evil',[17] Wesley took theodicy seriously, and ultimately saw it as an important test of God's omnipotence through the divine ability 'to extract good out of evil'.[18] In other words, Wesley tried to reconcile evil with eternal reason.

What this chapter will do is look at Wesley's understanding of the origins of evil. To do this the subject will be divided into two sections, an aesthetic theme, and a moral theme. We will first look at his aesthetic theme in which his doctrine of creation will be developed. Then we will look at his moral theme.

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[14] e.g. 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 344-5; 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, IV' (1748), BEW, I, 538; 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 12-3; 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 411; 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 424; 'The General Deliverance' (1781), II, 449; 'A Call to Backsliders' (1778), BEW, III, 211; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 285-6.

[15] 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 285.

[16] A slight misquote from Milton, Paradise Lost, I.26, found on the title page of 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), which was later republished in AM 2(1779), 505 ff, 553 ff, 609 ff. The quote also appeared in 'The Great Assize' (1758), BEW, I, 365; 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 399; 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 401; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 282-3; JWL VI, 137, (1775).

[17] Barth, Church Dogmatics (1975), III/I, 392, with whom Hick also agrees, Evil and the God of Love (1966), p. 160.

[18] 'On Mourning for the Dead' (1727), BEW, IV, 239; cf. Augustine, 'Enchiridion' (421-23), XI, XXVII (NPNF1, III, 240, 246).

Lastly, we will consider some of the implications Wesley thought his doctrine of free-will had on the omnipotence and omniscience of God.

2. The Aesthetic Theme- Creation and Eternal Reason

The first aspect of Wesley's aesthetic theme consisted of the relationship between creation and eternal reason. Wesley began the aesthetic theme by strongly asserting the moral attributes of justice and goodness to God, who is all powerful and all wise. The God who is good could only create a universe that was good. A basis for this concept was explored in the Arminian Magazine, in the article, 'Thoughts on Creation'.[19] It indicated a way in which one may understand how creation may share in certain attributes of God through relationality, while at the same time being distinct from God. There, it was argued that God cannot create anything but what he loves; God cannot love anything but what resembles the divine image in some degree; consequently, creation bears a certain measure of the image of God because it is the object of God's love, which is the primary cause of God's imparting perfection and happiness by representing the divine self in creation, which he saw as beautiful and excellent. This perfection and happiness was God's consubstantial image.

> In contemplating his eternal perfections, whose simple and indivisible unity is not only equivalent, but also infinitely superior to all possible multiplicity, he saw them so beautiful and so excellent; he was so delighted in beholding his consubstantial image, that by the free impulsion of the Holy Ghost, his essential goodness, co-eternal love and lover, he was determined to produce a numberless multitude of living images and lively pictures; not by dividing his substance, and erecting the different parcels of it into separate substances; but by creating real beings distinct from himself, and representative of his all-beautiful essence. Thus the free communicative goodness of God,

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[19] 'Thoughts on Creation' AM (1786), 150-2. I presume this is an extract, but I have not traced the source yet.

> flowed from the love of his consubstantial image, and so all the creatures originally were representative of the divine perfections; otherwise God could not have loved them; nor consequently willed their existence[...]. Hence none but the Son, or the consubstantial image of the Father, 'for whom, and by whom all things were made,' can know the properties and beauties of nature, the perfect resemblances and innumerable relations betwixt finite and infinite; the pictures and the original; none but he can manifest and reveal them to finite intelligences. It is only by this light and an intercourse with him, that we can know the Creator and the creatures, the cause and its effects, the Sovereign Artificer and his numberless works.[20]

In this view, creation is seen as something apart from God. But, creation exists only in relation to God, by love, through the Son and the Spirit. On the basis of this love, one may see something of a trinitarian relationality through whom the perfection and goodness of creation is mediated from God to creation. The consubstantial image of God and trinitarian relationality suggest a way in which Wesley could unequivocally believe in the total goodness of creation. Furthermore, 'as every creature was "good" in its primeval state, so, when all were compacted in one general system, "behold, they were very good."'[21] Each part of creation on its own was good, but the sum total of all the parts of creation were very good, and better than the whole.[22] That creation was very good 'in the highest degree' meant it was 'without any mixture of evil'.[23] In the 'very good' creation before the fall, Wesley was convinced all creation was 'the most perfect order and harmony', no 'volcanoes or burning mountains', 'no putrid lakes, no turbid or stagnating waters', 'no unwholesome vapours, no poisonous exhalations', 'no violent winter or sultry summer, no extreme either of

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[20] 'Thoughts on Creation' AM (1786), 150-1.
[21] 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 388.
[22] 'The Wisdom of God's Counsels' (1784), BEW, II, 552.
[23] 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 396-97.

heat or cold'.[24] Here, the aesthetic theme clearly emerged as impeccable beauty.[25]

2.1. The Aesthetic Theme- Creation and the Best World Possible

The very goodness of creation introduced another aspect of the aesthetic theme- that creation was the best world possible. It was Leibniz who created the argument for the best of all possible worlds. Leibniz was one of the eighteenth century 'optimists' (along with King, Jenyns, and Clarke), who thought that 'despite all that is bad within it our universe is nevertheless the very best that is possible'.[26] Leibniz argued,

> The wisdom of God, not content with embracing all the possibles, penetrates them, compares them, weighs them one against the other, to estimate their degrees of perfection or imperfection, the strong and the weak, the good and the evil[...]. The result of all these comparisons and deliberations is the choice of the best from among all these possible systems, which wisdom makes in order to satisfy goodness completely; and such is precisely the plan of the universe as it is.[27]

Although Outler did not explain what he meant, perhaps this 'best of all possible worlds' theme is what caused him to suggest that Wesley's theodicy had a 'Leibnizian ring' to it.[28] However, closer inspection must raise questions regarding the extent to which this is true.

First of all, Wesley's 'best of all worlds' was not based on modality (at least not explicitly), but on eternal reason and the attributes of God. The God who is perfectly good could not but create a world that was perfectly good. Secondly, the Optimists believed that

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[24] 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW II, 390-1.

[25] For a criticism of the Wesley's aesthetic theme see Joseph Barker, 'A Review of Wesley's Notions respecting the Primeval State of Man and the Universe' (London: 1848), pp. 22.

[26] A phrase derived from Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (1957), pp. 208-26, and used by Hick, Evil and the God of Love (1966), p. 151.

[27] Leibniz, Theodicy, (1952), §225.

[28] Outler, BEW, IV, 280. Wesley was eventually aware of the famous controversy between Leibniz and Samuel Clarke from 1715-16. See, JWJ, VI, 63.

in spite of all that is wrong with creation, creation as it is now after the fall is the best world possible. Leibniz and the optimists' thesis must inevitably conclude that if this is the best world possible, God cannot replace this one with a better one.[29] That is to say, a world with evil is not any better than a world without evil. Wesley would have denied this on two grounds. First, on the grounds of creation as it is, is not the same as creation as it was in the beginning.

> Had you therefore heard that vain King of Castile crying out with exquisite self-sufficiency, 'If I had made the world I would have made it better than God Almighty has made it,'[30] you might have replied: 'No: God Almighty- whether you know it or not- did not make it as it is now. He himself made it better, unspeakably better than it is at present. He made it without any blemish, yea, without any defect. He made no corruption, no destruction in the inanimate creation. He made not death in the animal creation, neither its harbingers, sin and pain. It was only [...]after man, in utter defiance of his Maker, had eaten of the tree of knowledge, that[...]a whole army of evils, totally new, totally unknown till then, broke in upon rebel man, and all other creatures, and overspread the face of the earth.[31]

Wesley argued for a best possible world, but it was a world without evil or sin. It was the world before the fall.

He would also have denied this on eschatological grounds. Leibniz's version of the best world possible implicitly could not accommodate the renewal of creation as a eschatological aspect of redemption. If this is the best world possible, what is the point of re-creation? It was Wesley's belief that creation would not always remain in its deplorable state. It will be delivered from its present state and restored (rather

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[29] This is the question raised by Langtry, 'Can God Replace the Actual World by a Better One?', Philosophical Papers, 20(1991)3, 183-92.

[30] See BEW, II, 397 note 43, part of which says, 'The 'vain king' was Alphonso X, 'El Sabio' (1221-84), and his ironic aphorism survives in many different versions[...]. Cf. John Norris, 'Sermon Preached Before the University of Oxford, Mar. 29, 1685', p. 2.

[31] 'God's Approbation of the His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 397-8.

significantly) 'with vast increase' over its original state before the fall.[32]

It must be admitted that Wesley's argument for the 'best possible world' was not an empirical argument, but an a priori argument (a proposition that can be known to be true or false without any reference to experience), something which is somewhat inconsistent with his empirical methodology.[33] But whatever the method of argument, to have imagined otherwise would have been an affront to 'the goodness or the wisdom of God in the creation'. God in his goodness and wisdom, his attributes of morality and omniscience, created from his omnipotence the best world possible, which was in the beginning one without sin.

2.2. The Aesthetic Theme- Creation and the 'Chain of Being'

The philosophical principle and structure beneath Wesley's aesthetic theme and his understanding of the best world possible was Plato's concept of the 'chain of being', and the 'principle of plenitude'. Knuuttila has suggested the principle of plenitude is the natural consequence of Aristotle's modal theory,[34] which Wesley employed indirectly through Peter of Spain, and more directly through Aldrich, as it appeared in his 'Compendium of Logic'. Wesley's own modality, then, is completely compatible with the 'chain of being'.

Outler has suggested that Wesley derived his concept of the 'chain of being' from John Hildrop, whom Wesley had extracted in the Arminian Magazine in 1782, under the title, 'Free Thoughts on the Brute Creation'. Outler also reckoned this was the inspiration for Wesley's sermon, 'The General Deliverance'.[35] But Wesley reflected an earlier knowledge of the concept, and acknowledged a different source of influence. This

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[32] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 446; cf. ENNT, Revelation 21.

[33] cf. Reichenbach, Evil and a Good God (1982), p. 121.

[34] Knuuttila, in, CHLMP (1988), p. 344.

[35] BEW, II, 436.

entire concept is developed at greater length in, Natural Philosophy (1777).

> The whole progress of nature is so gradual, that the entire chasm from a plant to man, is filled up with divers kinds of creatures, rising one above another, by so gentle an ascent, that the transitions from one species to another, are almost insensible. And the intermediate space is so well husbanded, that there is scarce a degree of perfection which does not appear in some. Now since the scale of being advances by such regular steps as high as man, is it not probable, that it still proceeds gradually upwards, through beings of a superior nature? As there is an infinitely greater space between the Supreme Being and man, than between man and the lowest insect.[36]

After drawing briefly upon Locke's thoughts on the subject,[37] the work quickly proceeded to add, 'This reflection upon *the scale of beings*, is pursued at large, by one of the finest writers of the age, Mr. Bonnet of Geneva, in that beautiful work, 'The Contemplation of Nature.''[38] From there he proceeded to extract Bonnet's work.

The concept found another expression in a later sermon, 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782). There he said,

> Every part was exactly suited to the others, and conducive to the good of the whole. There was 'a golden chain' (to use the expression of *Plato*)[39] 'let down from the throne of God'- an exactly connected series of beings, from the highest to the lowest: from dead earth, through fossils, vegetables, animals, to man, created in the image of God, and designed to know, to love, and enjoy his Creator to all eternity.[40]

Here, Wesley ascribes the concept to Plato.

It is not surprising to find Wesley so familiar with the theme, or even influenced by a variety of

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[36] NP (1777), IV, 57-60.
[37] NP (1777), IV, 58-9; cf. Locke, Essay, III.6.12.
[38] NP (1777), IV, 60.
[39] 'The 'proof-text' here is Plato's Thaeatetus, 153C, where Plato cites Homer's Iliad, viii.19, as a proof-text for the phrase [...]"the golden chain"', see Outler BEW, 396 n. 40.
[40] 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 396-97. Cf. Locke, Essay, III.vi.12, where he does not insist upon the necessity of plenitude, and says its existence is only probable.

sources. Lovejoy has noted that there has never been a period of time in which such a variety of writers from such a variety of disciplines talked so much about the chain of being than in the eighteenth century. Writers such as Joseph Addison, William King, Lord Bolingbroke, Pope, Haller, Thomson, Akenside, Count De Buffon,[41] Goldsmith, Diderot, Kant, Lambert, Herder, and Schiller all drew from the theme new, or previously evaded consequences.[42] It was within this rich context Wesley constructed his own understanding of the chain of being.

It had several aspects. The first, was that through the chain of being creation was structured as a hierarchy, in which all the parts of the golden chain 'are admirably connected together, to make up one universal whole'[43].

Secondly, in the paradise state this 'chain of being' was used to convey the blessings of God as they,

> flowed through man to the inferior creatures; as man was the great channel of communication between the Creator and the whole brute creation; so when man made himself incapable of transmitting those blessings, that communication was necessarily cut off.[44]

To use the term yet again, for Wesley the chain of being mediated 'relationality', which was implicit to eternal reason. This gave Wesley's hierarchical construction of the chain a mediatorial role. The implication of this is that man and woman were there to serve creation in a 'quasi-sacramental' way, i.e. by being a means of God's grace.

Another aspect of Wesley's chain of being was that the image of God was what separated humanity from brute creation. This distinction could not be made on the basis of understanding, liberty, and will, alone because Wesley argued that these are found in some measure in all creatures. He asked,

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[41] For Wesley's sound rebuke of Buffon's Natural History, see 'Remarks on The Count De Buffon's 'Natural History'', AM, 7(1782); also in Works, XIII, 448-55.

[42] Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (1957), pp. 183-4.

[43] 'Of Evil Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 16.

[44] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 442.

> What then makes the barrier between men and brutes? The line which they cannot pass? It was not reason. Set aside that ambiguous term: exchange it for the plain word, understanding, and who can deny that brutes have this? We may as well deny that they have sight or hearing. But it is this: man is capable of God, the inferior creatures are not.[45]

The concept Wesley used to speak of this capacity for God was the Triune image of God.

Another aspect of the chain of being was that while the creation of human beings may have been the pinnacle of the Genesis creation account, man and woman were only the 'via media', the middle link in the chain of being.[46] It must be noted, however, that in his comments on Psalm 8.5 ('Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels[...]') in Explanatory Notes on the Old Testament, Wesley said,

> the words more literally rendered are, *Thou madest him a little less than God.* And hence some have inferred, that man in his original state was the highest of all creatures.[47]

With that possible exception aside, we are still left with a question raised by chain of being- what is above humanity in it?

2.2.1. The Chain of Being and the Plurality of Worlds

In the eighteenth century many supposed higher life forms on other planets were above humanity in the chain. Lovejoy has already drawn attention to the fact that in 1764 Bonnet postulated there could be life on other planets, and on those other planets higher life forms could be found to fill in the gaps in the chain of being between humanity and God, leaving angelic life forms to

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[45] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 441.

[46] Lovejoy, Chain of Being (1957), pp. 189-95. An opinion also held by Locke (Essay, III.vi.12); Addison (Spectator, no. 621, Nov. 17, 1714); Bolingbroke (Fragments, in Works (1809), VIII.44, 186; and Pope (Essay on Man).

[47] ENOT, (1765). The exact date of publication is disputed because of it being published in weekly installments. This was an extraction of Matthew Henry's Exposition, and Poole's Annotations.

fill in the gap beyond that.[48] But Bonnet was not the first to contemplate the plurality of habitable worlds. The plurality of worlds was a tradition of thought with a history in its own right, a tradition familiar to Wesley. It was suggested in Cicero's, On the Nature of the Gods,[49] a work well known by Wesley and quoted no less than eight times in his sermons alone.[50] Additionally, Wesley displayed familiarity with at least three popular authors on the subject.[51] Two made something of an obscure appearance in his, Natural Philosophy. They were Louis Dutens, Inquiry into the Origin of the Discoveries Attributed to the Moderns (1769), and Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle, Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds.[52] Another, Christian Huygens and his work, Celestial Worlds Discovered, Or Conjectures on the Planetary Worlds (English translation, 1689), Wesley quoted in his sermon, 'What is Man' (1787). Wesley first read this work in September 1759 and remarked,

> I read Mr. Hygens's [sic] Conjectures on the Planetary World. He surprised me. I think he clearly proves that the moon is not inhabitable; that there are neither 'Rivers nor mountains on her spotty globe';[53] that there is no sea, no water on her surface, nor any atmosphere. And hence he very rationally infers that 'Neither are any of the secondary planets inhabited.' And who can prove that the primary are? I know the earth is. Of the rest I know nothing.[54]

The important thing is what did Wesley make of all this speculation about the plurality of habitable worlds? In the end, he called it

> a very favourite notion with all those who deny the Christian revelation- and for this reason: because it affords them a foundation for so plausible an objection to it. But the more I consider that supposition, the more I

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[48] Contemplation de la Nature, 2nd ed. (1769), I, 23-24, 84, in Lovejoy, Chain of Being (1957), pp. 194-5.
[49] I.x.25, cf. I.xxxix.98.
[50] BEW, I, 252; II, 473, 503, 535, 536, 577, 578; III, 86. See IV, 587.
[51] See, BEW, II, 503 note 20.
[52] See, NP (1777), V, 3, 114.
[53] Milton, Paradise Lost, I.291 (see PWHS V, 116).
[54] JWJ, IV, 354.

> doubt it. Insomuch that if it were allowed by all the philosophers in Europe, still I could not allow it without stronger proof than any I have met with yet[...]. 'But', you will say, 'suppose this argument fails, we may infer the same conclusion, the plurality of worlds, from the unbounded wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Creator. It was full as easy to him to create thousands or millions of worlds as one. Can anyone then believe that he would exert all his power and wisdom in creating a single world? What proportion is there between this speck of creation and the great God that filleth heaven and earth! While
>
> We know the power of his Almighty hand
> could form another world from every sand![55]
>
> To this boasted proof, this *argumentum palmarium* [an unanswerable argument] of the learned infidels, I answer, Do you expect to find any proportion between finite and infinite? Suppose God had created a thousand more worlds than there are grains of sand in the universe, what proportion would all these together bear to the infinite Creator? Still, in comparison of him, they would be, not a thousand times, but infinitely less than a mite compared to the universe.[56]

Here, Wesley anticipated an argument for the plurality of worlds, because of the tremendous gap in the gradation between this creation (i.e. the empirical, observable world) and the 'great God that filleth heaven and earth'. Wesley's own 'argumentum palmarium' was that all the habitable worlds combined could still not compare to the 'infinite Creator'. The plurality of worlds did not solve the gaps in the chain of being.

2.2.2. The Chain of Being and Angelology

Alternatively, in Wesley's view higher up in the chain of being from humanity were angels.[57]

> But the scale of the creation does not terminate at man. Another universe commences there, whose extent, perhaps, compared to that of this, is as the space of the solar vortex

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[55] cf. William Broome, 'The forty-third Chapter of Ecclesiasticus Paraphrased', and Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems (1744), II.99, BEW III, 463 note 50.

[56] 'What is Man?' (1787), BEW, III, 462-3. But cf. NP (1777), V, 114-6.

[57] For an interesting poetic comparison between angels and men see Charles's hymn, 'A Dialogue of ANGELS and MEN' in Hymns and Sacred Poems, 3rd edn. (1756).

> to the capacity of a nut. There shine the CELESTIAL HIERARCHIES, like glittering STARS.[58]

Since the reality of angels exists beyond sensory perception, they can ultimately only be known by faith.[59] The most basic expression of faith in the existence of angels was through philosophy, which is where he started his argument for their existence. He had two philosophical sources at that point. The first was Plato, Socrates, and Hesiod.[60] Greek philosophy alone was not enough to supply Wesley with what he obviously knew about angels. By far the most signficant source of influence on Wesley's angelology was Milton's, Paradise Lost. Not only did he quote Milton no less that 77 times in his sermons alone, he also published, An Extract from Milton's Paradise Lost (1763), in an attempt to popularize Milton for Methodists.[61] His regard for Milton was such that he once said Milton's account of the creation and fall was, 'not only simple, easy, and comprehensible, but consistent with the highest reason, and altogether worthy of God'.[62] Fletcher's thesis is that Milton's doctrine of angels was partially influenced by the Scholastics who were decidedly Christian and non-Jewish, but he also depended upon Rabbinical sources for his whole treatment of angels.[63] Fletcher presented a strong case, which has obvious implications on Wesley's own angelology, resulting in a second-hand connection between Wesley and medieval Christian and Rabbinic angelology. Unfortunately that connection cannot be fully explored here.

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[58] NP (1777), IV, 110. This was a part of his extraction of Bonnet.

[59] 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 31.

[60] 'Of Good Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 4-6.

[61] An Extract from Milton's Paradise Lost (1763. See, Oscar Sherwin, 'Milton for the Masses: John Wesley's Edition of Paradise Lost', Modern Language Quarterly, 12(1951), 267-85; Samuel J. Rogal, 'The Role of Paradise Lost in Works by John and Charles Wesley', Milton Quarterly 13(1979), 114-19.

[62] 'Remarks on Mr. H.'s account of the Gentoo Religion in Hindostan' in Lloyd's Evening Post, Nov. 30, 1774; and Works, XIII, 403-8.

[63] Fletcher, Milton's Rabbinical Readings (1930), p. 255.

Ultimately, the existence of angels can be best understood by the revelation of Scripture, which supplies the defect of experience, and the short-coming of philosophy, or reason. Revelation 'only gives us a clear, rational, consistent account of those whom our eyes have not seen, nor our ears heard[...]'.[64] The assent to the knowledge of angels consisted of a failed empiricism (or experience), philosophy (or reason), and revelation, which completed the knowledge.

Wesley's own angelology was worked out in three sermons, 'Of Good Angels' (1783), 'Of Evil Angels' (1783), and 'On Guardian Angels' (1726).[65] It is clear he believed that

> sometime, before the foundations of the earth were laid God created angels. 'And what is the duration which has passed since the creation of angels to that which passed before they were created-to unbeginning eternity? to that half of eternity (if one may so speak) which had then elapsed!'[66]

As created beings, they were finite. When God created angels, they were God's 'first-born sons intelligent beings',[67] created as, 'spirits, even the highest angels, even cherubim and seraphim, to dwell in material vehicles, though of an exceeding light and subtle substance.'[68] Through an interesting exegesis of Psalm 104.4, he concluded angels are

> not material or corporeal beings; not clogged with flesh and blood like us, having bodies, if any, not gross and earthly like ours, but of a finer substance, resembling fire or flame more than any other of these lower elements. And is not something like this intimated in those words of the Psalmist, 'Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire!'[69]

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[64] 'Of Good Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 6.
[65] See Outler's comments in, BEW, III, 3.
[66] 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, III, 458.
[67] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 6.
[68] 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 63. Cf. JWL, VI, 214 (1776), 'the soul will not be encumbered with flesh and blood; but probably it will have some sort of ethereal vehicle, even before God clothes is "with our nobler house of empyrean light."'
[69] 'Of Good Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 6; ENOT, Psalm 104.4.

Their understanding, sight, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and strength are all beyond our comprehension.[70] After being endowed with these 'super-human' traits, they were then given the moral law, written by 'the finger of God' on the 'inmost spirit' of the angels.[71] By the moral law they knew the perfect will of God, which they kept willingly, perfectly, and continually.[72] This, they were able to do because,

> As spirits he has endued them with understanding, will, or affections (which are indeed the same thing, as the affections are only the will exerting itself various ways), and liberty. And are not these- understanding, will, and liberty- essential to, if not the essence of, a spirit?[73]

All of which enabled even the angels to

> discern truth from falsehood, good from evil; and as a necessary result of this, with liberty, a capacity of choosing the one and refusing the other. By this they were likewise enabled to offer him a free and willing service: a service rewardable in itself, as well as most acceptable to their gracious Master.[74]

Because they were given a will, even the angels were capable of sinning. Eventually this liberty became the cause of the heavenly revolt,[75] which first planted the general root of sin

> in heaven itself by Lucifer, 'Son of the morning'-[76] till then undoubtedly 'one of the first, if not the first archangel'.[77] 'Thou saidst, I will sit upon the side of the

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[70] 'Of Good Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 6-8; 'On Guardian Angels' (1726), BEW, IV, 228-9, 233.

[71] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 7.

[72] 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, VI' (1748), BEW, I, 583-4.

[73] 'Of Good Angels' (1783), BEW III, 6. It is interesting to compare Wesley's angelology with that of John of Damascus, 'Exposition of the Orthodox Faith', II.iii.

[74] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 6.

[75] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW II, 476.

[76] Isaiah 14.12.

[77] Milton, Paradise Lost, V.659-60. Notice how Wesley quotes Scripture and Milton side by side in such a way that only the scholars of the Bible or Milton could tell them apart.

> north.'[78] See self-will, the first-born of Satan![79] 'I will be like the Most High.'[80] See Pride, the twin sister of self-will. Here was the true origin of evil. Hence came the inexhaustible flood of evils upon the lower world. When Satan had once transfused his own self-will and pride into the parents of mankind, together with a new species of sin- love of the world, the loving the creature above the Creator- all manner of wickedness soon rushed in, all ungodliness and unrighteousness, shooting out into crimes of every kind, soon covering the whole face of the earth with all manner of abominations[...]. From the devil the spirit of independence, self-will, and pride, productive of all ungodliness and unrighteousness, quickly infused themselves into the hearts of our first parents in paradise.[81]

The one responsible for evil was the devil, the personification, of independence, self-will, and pride. The devil represented quintessential estrangement from God, the antithesis to relationality. The abuse of liberty, penultimately caused evil and estrangement. The ultimate answer to 'Unde malum?' had to be Lucifer's self-will.

Unfortunately, he was not the only self-willed angel. When Lucifer fell, 'He did not fall alone, but soon drew after him a third part of the stars of heaven; in consequence of which they lost their glory and happiness, and were driven from their former habitation.'[82] In Wesley's angelology, this fall occurred in spite of their existing without flesh and blood, and in spite of their being endued with 'super-human' traits of understanding, sight, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and strength, many privileges not to be enjoyed by Adam. The angelic revolt occurred, and evil came about not because angels were made 'ex nihilo', but because of self-will, pride, and the abuse of free-will. The

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[78] Cf. Isaiah 14.13.

[79] A phrase used by Polycarp, 'The Epistles of Polycarp', VII (ANF, I, 34).

[80] Isaiah 14.14.

[81] 'The Deceitfulness of the Human Heart' (1790), BEW, IV, 152, 154; cf. 'An Extract from a Discourse concerning the mercy of God in Preserving us from Evil Angels', AM 10(1787), 202-5.

[82] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 476.

consequence of this revolt was that it divided the upper part of the chain of being between good angels and evil angels, creating a cosmological dualism, in which God and the good angels are working for humanity, and against Satan and the evil angels.[83]

From the philosophical abstraction of a 'chain of being', he constructed a hierarchy of perfection. Reichenbach has noted that if one assumes, as Wesley did, that presiding at the top of the chain of being between humanity and God are angels,

> one might follow Thomas Aquinas in holding that angels are able to know and consequently differ in their knowledge, and on this basis be able to distinguish between higher and lower angels. But if this is the case, the chain of perfection is not finite but rather infinite, insofar as it asymptotically[84] approaches, e.g. the perfect knowledge of the creator. For any particular angel with n knowledge, one could conceive of another angel with n+1 knowledge. And even if there were only one being, it would be possible to conceive of another being either with more characteristics or possessing characteristics had by that being more perfectly.[85]

Such a hierarchy could make the entire concept of 'best possible world', as suggested by Lovejoy and Hick, meaningless, as 'these characteristics would exist or be possessed in an asymptotic series which increasingly approaches but never reaches the degree of perfection found in God.'[86] While such a concept might indeed make the 'chain of being' meaningless, it is the asymptotic nature of angelic perfection which in fact prevents the cosmological dualism from becoming an ontological one. Furthermore, because of the strong mythological element in this cosmology Satanic influences are enlarged to almost ontological proportions. This problem seems to be at least partially rooted in the 'logic of perfec-

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[83] 'Of Evil Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 16-29.

[84] i.e. 'denoting a line or series that approaches nearer and nearer to a curve or limit but will never reach that curve or limit within a finite distance' (Flew, Dictionary of Philosophy (1983), p. 29).

[85] Reichenbach, Evil and a Good God (1982), p. 125.

[86] Reichenbach, Evil and a Good God (1982), p.126.

tion' when the attributes of God are combined with theistic proofs of God's existence.[87]

As one looks at Wesley's aesthetic theme one may see (1) that he held to the goodness of God, and creation; (2) he held to a 'chain of being' within creation, in which the human role was to serve as a channel of God's grace to the remainder of creation; (3) he held to a cosmological dualism; (4) but the most significantly Wesley did not define evil in aesthetic terms. His doctrine of an impeccable creation, in which matter is ontologically neutral, indicates evil cannot be defined in those terms. He thought evil could be completely accounted for through the abuse of free-will, which Wesley eventually came to understand as being 'a power of choosing or refusing either good or evil'.[88] How Wesley came to this conclusion can be seen particularly in his reactions to the works of William King and Soame Jenyns, two of the 'optimists' and eighteenth century heirs of the Augustinian tradition.

3. Wesley's Moral Theme

William King had argued, like Leibniz, that when God created the world, God created the best world possible.[89] He also argued that because it was created from nothing it was by necessity imperfect. From the imperfection of creation King explained natural evil, saying it arose by necessity from matter in motion,[90] not all of which is necessarily bad, as pain warns the soul against danger, which operates to preserve life.[91] To account for moral evil, King introduced his second

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[87] Schwöbel, in, Christian Faith and Theology (1991), pp. 197-217. What seems to be an implication of the argument above is this: while New Testament studies show that something of a Zoroastrian influence may be seen in the New Testament documents, the church fathers found the concept of the chain of being a more tolerable way of accounting a cosmological dualism to combat the ontological dualism of the Manichaean heresy.

[88] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 476.

[89] See Leibniz comments on King's work 'Observations on the Book Concerning 'The Origin of Evil'', in the 'Appendices' of Theodicy (Huggard, pp. 405-42).

[90] King, Origin of Evil (1702), pp. 9-15.

[91] King, Origin of Evil (1702), pp. 150-55.

main argument. Within this imperfect, but best of possible worlds, God created the first humans and endowed them with a will to choose between good and evil, saying that unless God had done so, 'more and greater evils would befall the universe from such an interposition, than from the abuse of free-will'.[92] The universe simply required free-will to benefit the universe.[93]

Soame Jenyns, in, A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil (1757), did not argue for free-will at all. He maintained

> that natural Evils exist from some necessity in the Nature of things which no power can dispense with or prevent, the expediency of moral Evil will follow on course: for if misery could not be excluded from the works of a benevolent Creator by infinite power, these miseries must be endured by some creatures or other for the good of the whole[...].[94]

All of which comes from the, 'Evils of Imperfection', which, 'are in truth no Evils at all, but rather the absence of some comparative Good[...]'.[95] Which meant for Jenyns that,

> The true solution then of this incomprehensible paradox must be this, that all Evils owe their existence solely to the necessity of their own natures, by which I mean they could not possibly have been prevented, without the loss of some superior Good, or the permission of some greater Evil than themselves; or that many will unavoidably insinuate themselves by the natural relations and circumstances of things into the most perfect system of Created Beings, even in opposition to the will of an almighty Creator, by reason they cannot be excluded without working contradictions; which not being proper objects of power, it is not diminution of omnipotence to affirm that it cannot effect them.[96]

Jenyns was clearly more radical in his assertion of the defective nature of creation as a result of his denial of free-will. This introduced a necessitarian strand in

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[92] King, Origin of Evil (1702), p. 356; cf. p. 340.
[93] King, Origin of Evil (1702), p. 369.
[94] Jenyns, Free Inquiry (1757), p. 102.
[95] Jenyns, Free Inquiry (1757), p. 25.
[96] Jenyns, Free Inquiry (1757), p. 15.

Jenyns's thoughts. Nonetheless, Jenyns was confident his system could unlock,

> all the mysteries and perplexing doctrines of[...]all those abstruse speculations of Original Sin, Grace and Predestination[...] which the most learned have never yet been able to make consistent with Reason or Common-sense.[97]

However, it would beasystem Wesley would reject.

3.1. Wesley's Response to the Optimists

Wesley was aware of both works by King and Jenyns. He would have been familiar with King's work as it appeared in Latin without Gay's introduction, or Law's copious footnotes. In 1730, Wesley wrote a letter to his father saying,

> A week or two ago I pleased myself mightily with the hopes of sending you a full satisfactory solution of your great question, have at last procured the celebrated treatise of Archbishop King, De Origine Mali. But on looking farther into it I was strangely disappointed, finding it the least satisfactory account of any given by any author whom I ever read in my life. He contradicts almost every man that ever writ on the subject, and builds an hypothesis on the ruins of theirs which he takes to be entirely new, though if I do not much mistake, part of it is at least two thousand years old. The purport of this is, 'that natural evils flow naturally and necessarily from the essence of matter, so that God himself could not have prevented them, unless by not creating matter at all'. Now this new supposition seems extremely like the old one of the Stoics, who I fancy always affirmed, *totidem verbis*, that 'all natural evils were owing not to God's want of will, but to his want of power to redress them, as necessarily flowing from the nature of matter'.[98]

In his next letter Wesley revealed something of a higher regard for King. Nearly fifty years later he published it in the Arminian Magazine in 1780.[99] It is a rather straightforward extraction with no critical

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[97] Jenyns, Free Enquiry (1757), p. 110
[98] BEW, XXV, 258.
[99] BEW, XXV, 264-67, which appeared in AM 3(1780), 607-11.

notes inserted into the text, apart from this introductory remark.

> Though some of the *postulata* upon which Archbishop King builds his hypothesis of the origin of evil be such as very few will admit of, yet since the superstructure is regular and well contrived I thought you would not be unwilling to see the scheme of that celebrated work.[100]

Wesley was aware that King asserted the necessity of imperfection of created beings, and also that King saw God and man both endued with a self-determining power. Of this latter point Wesley, in his extraction of King, said,

> That man partakes of this principle I conclude, (1), because experience shows it; (2), because we observe in ourselves the signs and properties of such a power. We observe we can counteract our appetites, senses, and even our reason if we so choose; which we can no otherwise account for than by admitting such a power in ourselves.[101]

Wesley would certainly not have disagreed with that. However, the 'postulata' upon which King built his 'hypothesis' was what Wesley disagreed with and what initially led him to call King a 'Stoic', not because King denied free will, but because he held that evil flows by necessity from the constitutive manner of matter's existence.

This point becomes more abundantly clear in Wesley's objection to Jenyns, when he said,

> evil did not exist at all in the original nature of things. It was no more necessary result of matter than it was the necessary result of spirit. All things then, without exception were very good. And how could they be otherwise?[102]

In another place, Wesley declared free will alone was the

> full answer to that plausible account 'of the origin of evil' published to the world some years since, and supposed to unanswerable- 'that it necessarily resulted from the nature

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[100] BEW, XXV, 264.
[101] BEW, XXV, 266.
[102] 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 398, and note Wesley's footnote as enhanced by Outler.

> of matter, which God was not able to alter'. It is very kind of this sweet-tongued orator to make an excuse for God![103] But there is really no occasion for it[...].[104]

If evil did not arise from creation, then, 'Unde malum?' For Wesley, evil was caused only by the will. What followed after the ellipsis in the quote just above were actually these words:

> God hath answered for himself. He made man in his own image, a spirit endued with understanding and liberty. Man abusing that liberty evil, brought sin and pain into the world. This God permitted in order to a fuller manifestation of his wisdom, justice, and mercy, by bestowing on all who would receive it in infinitely greater happiness than they could possible have attained if Adam had not fallen.[105]

We must put aside for now the last, and perhaps most provocative part of the quote, although it does hint at Wesley's participation in 'O felix culpa!' tradition. What must be pointed out at this moment is Wesley's belief that evil can be accounted for entirely by the will, which makes its origins moral, not aesthetic. He was convinced that, 'Without freedom the origin of moral and physical evil would be unintelligible and even impossible.'[106]

This can be seen in his extraction of Humphrey Ditton, who was himself responding to Hobbes's materialism.[107] Wesley's extraction of Ditton was published along with the one of King's, Origin of Evil in the Arminian Magazine. It was concerned with two things: (1) Ditton wished to deny any sort of ontological dualism, as suggested by the 'Manichees', in order to

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[103] Perhaps this is an obscure reference to Jenyns's election as MP for Cambridge 1742-80.

[104] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 434. Cf. 'God's Approbation of the His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 397-8 as referred to in note 81 above. It is rather interesting to note that the title of a chapter in Wesley's 'Historiae et Praecepta Selecta' (Bristol: Farley, 1748) was, 'The will to sin is sin itself', (see Green, Bibliography (1896), p. 55).

[105] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 434. Cf. 'God's Approbation of the His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 397-8.

[106] 'Of Human Liberty', AM 8(1785), 258.

[107] BEW, XXV, 240-2 (1729); cf. AM, 3(1780), 604-6.

account for evil; and, (2) accounting for the presence of evil by attributing it to the willful deviation from God's 'eternal rules and measures of fitness'.

Leading up to the point where Wesley started his extraction, Ditton argued that one cannot hold to a materialist's view of creation and free will at the same time.[108] For Ditton, a denial of Hobbes's (even Descartes's and Newton's) mechanical explanation of the universe had to be established before the affirmation of free-will, in order to exonerate God of evil. Once that had been established, free-will accounted for the presence of evil in the world. In Wesley's extraction of Ditton we read,

> Farther, it no way derogated from any one perfection of an Infinite Being to endow other beings which he made with such a power as we call liberty; that is, to furnish them with such capacities, dispositions, and principles of action that it should be possible for them either to observe or to deviate from those eternal rules and measures of fitness and agreeableness with respect to certain things and circumstances which were so conformable to the infinite rectitude of his own will, and which infinite reason must necessarily discover. *Now evil is a deviation from those measures of eternal, unerring order and reason- not to choose what is worthy to be chosen, and is accordingly chose by such a will as the divine.* And to bring this about no more is necessary than the exerting certain acts of that power we call free will. By which power we are enabled to choose or refuse, and to determine ourselves to action accordingly. Therefore, without having recourse to any ill principle, we may fairly account for the origin of evil from the possibility of a various use of our liberty, even as that capacity or possibility itself is ultimately founded on the defectibility and finiteness of a created nature.[109]

The most significant development here is that evil is defined as the act of not choosing good, and deviating from eternal reason. It is not defined as the absence of good, which marks a notable departure on Wesley's

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[108] Ditton, Discourse (1712), p. 474, 490 (the emphasis is his).

[109] BEW, XXV, 241-2 (1729); cf. Ditton, Discourse (1712), pp. 424-7 (the emphasis is mine).

part from the Augustinian tradition of theodicy.[110] For Wesley, abuse of liberty may have indeed arisen from the defectibility of being a finite creature. But this was no evil. Evil resulted from an abuse of the will, which meant the origins of evil was completely moral in nature. Wesley thought to say otherwise (as King had) made God the author of evil, in as much as God was responsible for creation.[111] By making the manner of creation the presupposition to the definition of evil, Wesley saw in the Optimists a strand of necessitarianism, in as much as he called King a Stoic.

This position is further reinforced by one of his later sermons, 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781).

> And God created man, not only in his *natural*, but likewise in his own *moral* image. He created him not only *in knowledge*, but also in righteousness, and true holiness. As his understanding was without blemish, perfect in its kind, so were all his affections[...]. But it cannot be doubted he might mistake evil for good. He was not infallible; therefore not impeccable. And this unravels the whole difficulty of the grand question, *unde malum?* 'How came evil into the world?' It came from 'Lucifer, son of the morning': it was 'the work of the devil'. 'For the devil', saith the Apostle, 'sinneth from the beginning;'[112] that is, was the first sinner in the universe; the author of sin; the first being who by the abuse of his liberty introduced evil into the creation. 'He, of the first, If not the first archangel,'[113] was tempted to think too highly of himself. He freely yielded to the temptation, and gave way first to pride, then to self-will.[114]

The defectibility of the created nature was precisely located in the fallibility and imperfection of first the angelic will, and then later the human will. Human and angelic wills were not impeccable. The defect was not

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[110] Augustine, City of God (426), XI.9 (NPNF1, II, 210); Enchiridion (420), XI (NPNF1, III, 240). See my forthcoming annual lecture to the Wesley Fellowship, 'Wesley and Augustine on the Origins of Evil'.

[111] A position also held by Browne, see Winnett, Peter Browne (1974), pp. 30-49.

[112] The 'Apostle' was Isaiah, in Isaiah 14.12.

[113] Milton, Paradise Lost, V.659-60.

[114] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW II, 475-6. Cf. view of Clement of Alexandria, 'The Stromata', 1.17.

in the manner of creation, but in the will, which was located in the soul, an immaterial substance. All this seems to indicate that for Wesley, the defect in creation was moral and not aesthetic, immaterial and not material. From here, Wesley attempted to unravel the entire question of 'Unde malum?'

3.2. Moral, Natural, and Penal Evils

From the abuse of free will, which resulted in the deviation from eternal reason, the different types of evil can be explained. In the sermon prepared by Wesley during the 'Unde malum?' correspondence with his father, Wesley wrote,

> It has indeed been well observed, that all evil is either natural, moral, or penal; that natural evil or pain is no evil at all if it be overbalanced with following pleasure; that moral evil, or sin, cannot possibly befall anyone unless those who willingly embrace, who choose it; and that penal evil, or punishment, cannot possibly befall any unless they likewise choose it by choosing sin. This entirely cuts off all imputation on the justice or goodness of God, since it can never be proved that it is contrary to either of these to give his creatures [the] liberty of embracing either good or evil, to put happiness and misery in their own hands, to leave them the choice of life and death.[115]

From this quote it is clear Wesley held to a traditional division of natural, moral, and penal evil. Moral and penal evils were completely contingent upon the abuse of free-will. How natural evil was also contingent upon the abuse of free-will was somewhat obscured in this passage. But in other places he demonstrated how even natural evil was the consequence of Adam's choice of evil, saying that after Adam's sin,

> man made himself incapable of transmitting those blessings, that communication was necessarily cut off. The intercourse between God and the inferior creatures being stopped, those blessings could no longer flow in upon them. And then it was that 'the creature', every creature, 'was subject to vanity', to sorrow, to pain of every kind, to all manner

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[115] 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 285.

> of evils. 'Not' indeed 'willingly'; not by its own choice, not by any act or deed of its own; 'but by reason of him that subjected it'; by the wise permission of God, determining to draw eternal good out of this temporary evil. But in what respects was 'the creature', every creature, then 'made to subject to vanity'? [...]The very foundations of their nature are out of course, are turned upside down.[116]

The first humans had not suffered as the result of a defective creation. Creation had suffered as the result of a fallen humanity. The chain of being had become dysfunctional (more of this will be made in the chapter on original sin). The defect that led to the dysfunction was located precisely in the will.

That natural evil is the consequence of moral evil was further reinforced by his response to the many earthquakes which occurred in his lifetime. It became evident that for Wesley even natural disaster was seen as the result of moral evil, which God uses to punish sinful humankind.[117] In a sermon by Charles Wesley, which for many years had been wrongly attributed to John,[118] we read,

> earthquakes are the works of the Lord, and He only bringeth this destruction upon the earth. Now, that God is himself the Author, and sin the *moral* cause, of earthquakes, (whatever the natural cause may be,) cannot be denied by any who believe the Scriptures[...]. Earthquakes are set forth by the inspired writers as God's proper judicial act, or the punishment of sin: Sin the cause, earthquakes the effect, of his anger.[119]

Although used more by Charles as a tool to call sinners

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[116] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 442-3.

[117] BEW, XX, 320 (1750), XX, 323 (1750), JWJ, IV, 211 (1757), V, 517 (1773); 'Serious Thoughts occasioned by the Late Earthquake at Lisbon' (1755), in Works, XI, 1-13. See Outler, BEW, I, 357 note 6. Charles had even written a hymn attributing drought to sin, Unpublished Poetry (1992), III, 212-13. It is perhaps worth comparing Wesley's views with those of Gregory Nazianzen, Oration XVI, 'On His Father's Silence, Because of the Plague of Hail', NPNF2, VII, 247-54.

[118] Outler, BEW, IV, 524.

[119] Charles Wesley, 'The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes' (1750), in, Works, VII, 387.

to repentance,[120] it is obvious both Wesleys held this same interpretation of natural evil as the consequence of moral evil. What it helps to illustrate is how John Wesley thought the material world was affected by the abuse of free-will, which could have been interpreted as a defective immaterial world.

Wesley seems to have held to a mythological explanation of evil, which locates the origin of evil in a primordial rebellion of creators (Satan, Lucifer, et al.) against the Creator. A more modern version of this view is put forth by N.P. Williams in, Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin (1924). King's presentation was more of a metaphysical one, which ascribes moral evil to the nature of finite existence. A modern representative of this view is F.R. Tennant.[121] On the basis of this interpretation Wesley took his own theodicy out of the Augustinian tradition, as he refused to define evil aesthetically, but morally.

4. Free-Will, Foreknowledge, and the Doctrine of God

Explaining theodicy by way of free-will may solve one problem- it may exonerate God of the responsibility of evil- but it creates others, especially for the doctrine of God, and the divine attributes of omniscience and omnipotence. Wesley was aware that the free-will account of the presence of evil created such problems and sought to address them. Because he was aware of such systematic pressure points, it indicates he thought systematically about the matter.

4.1. Free-Will and the Paradox of Omnipotence

First, there is the paradox of omnipotence, an issue of importance even to the contemporary debate on theodicy. Some would argue that while free-will

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[120] Another example is Charles Wesley, 'Hymns Occasioned by the Earthquake' Parts I (1750, 6 hymns), and II (1750, 13 hymns). Several of these hymns found their way into the Collection (1780), (particularly) 62-63, 65, 441A.

[121] See Winnett, Peter Browne (1974), pp. 35-6.

relocates the responsibility of evil from Creator to creature, it also denies God divine omnipotence, in that

> there is a fundamental difficulty in the notion of an omnipotent God creating men with free will, for if men's wills are really free this must mean that God cannot control them, that is, that God is no longer omnipotent.[122]

A part of the problem is defining omnipotence. Anglin was right when he said,

> The difficulty with the concept of omnipotence is not so much to prove that a being is omnipotent as to give a good definition of 'omnipotence'. Everyone knows the riddle about whether God can create a stone he cannot lift. Moreover, most would agree that, although it is a silly riddle, it points to a real problem: what exactly is meant by 'omnipotence'?[123]

Indeed, it is critical how one defines omnipotence. What did Wesley mean by omnipotence?

4.1.1. Omnipotence as Power and Restraint

Wesley explained, or described omnipotence in this way:

> Only he that can do all things else cannot deny himself; he cannot counteract himself, or suppose his own work. Were it not for this he would destroy all sin, with its attendant pain, in a moment. He would abolish wickedness out of his whole creation, and suffer no trace of it to remain. But in so doing he would counteract himself, he would altogether overturn his own work, and undo all that he has been doing since he created man upon the earth. For he created man in his own image: a spirit, like himself; a spirit endued with understanding, with will, or affections, and liberty- without which neither his understanding nor his affections could have been of any use, neither would he have been capable either of vice or virtue. He could not be a moral agent, any more than a tree or a stone. If therefore God were thus to exert his power there would certainly be no more vice; but it

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[122] Mackie, in, The Power of God, (1978), p. 28. Who agrees with Kenny, God of the Philosophers (1979), p. 98. Which raises the question posed by Anglin, 'Can God Create a Being He Cannot Control?', Analysis, 40(1980), 222-3. None of which is new, as Pierre Bayle raised the same issues in Dictionnaire historique et critique (1697), III, 1152.

[123] Anglin, Free Will and the Christian Faith (1990), p. 48.

> is equally certain, neither could there be an virtue in the world. Were human liberty taken away men would be as incapable of virtue as stones. Therefore (with reverence be it spoken) the Almighty himself cannot do this thing. He cannot thus contradict himself, or undo what he has done. He cannot destroy out of the soul of man that image of himself wherein he made him. And without doing this he cannot abolish sin and pain out of the world. But were it to be done it would imply no wisdom at all, but barely a stroke of omnipotence.[124]

There are several significant aspects to this understanding of omnipotence. First, it affirmed that God can do all things. It is only because God can do all things that God is capable of willing not to counteract the Divine self. In this instance, the initial divine action was giving humans liberty as a part of the image of God in order to make them capable of virtue. This action, because it was divine, cannot be countered. Secondly, because God is all-powerful God has the power not to change or re-create the past. God cannot change the fact that Adam has fallen. In essence, what this means is that God cannot change the past so that it would be the case that there never was any evil.[125]

What is actually at the heart of Wesley's view of omnipotence is a view which distinguishes the power of God from its exercise.[126] God is all-powerful, which means God has the power to extinguish sin, but does not exercise it, because it would be a self-counteraction of having created a being in the divine image with a free-will. God cannot abolish sin without also abolishing free-will (also a significant part of the image of God), since free-will is the cause of sin. So Wesley's definition of omnipotence included the notion that God

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[124] 'On Divine Providence' (1786), BEW, II, 540-1.

[125] For an opposing view see Shestov, Athens and Jerusalem, (1966), who says God can change history. See Anglin, Free Will (1990), p. 55 note 20.

[126] cf. Anglin, Free Will (1990), p. 50. The distinction between a power and its exercise was also made by Pelagius. Augustine quoted him as saying that, although God gave the ability to speak, it was Pelagius who used the ability, Augustine, On Nature and Grace (415), XLV (NPNF1 V, 138-9).

had the power to create a person with free-will, and he did so not by means of limiting his power to control things, but by limiting its exercise.[127]

Anglin argues that there are three ways in which power can be curtailed. First, the power may be destroyed, which is clearly not the case. Secondly, the conditions needed to use the power may not have been met. Thirdly,

> one can curtail a power by exercising another power whose exercise is inconsistent with the exercise of the power in question[...]. If God exercises his power to give created beings an autonomous role in deciding the future of the universe then he cannot at the same time exercise his power of ensuring that everything in the universe goes according to his perfect will.[128]

Only an all-powerful God could create a power which would allow God the freedom to restrain power and limit its exercise. Because God has limited divine power in this not everything that happens is in accordance to the Divine will.

4.1.2. Omnipotence and the Power of Providential Control

Such a view is not incongruent with the Wesleyan view seen above, and thus becomes one way through which the paradox of omnipotence may be resolved. However, Wesley would not have left it at that. While a free-will defense of the origin of evil means that many things are not in accordance with the Divine will it does not mean that God is either powerless, or out of control of creation. God is in control through the means of providence, which became another way in which Wesley sought to resolve the paradox of omnipotence. Of providence he said, 'There is scarce any doctrine in the whole compass of revelation which is of deeper importance than this.'[129]

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[127] cf. Anglin, Free Will (1990), p. 52.
[128] Anglin, Free Will (1990), pp. 53-4.
[129] 'On Divine Providence' (1786), BEW, II, 537.

A vast part of the doctrine was worked out in the sermon, 'On Divine Providence' (1786), much of which he derived from John Wilkins, Discourse Concerning the Beauty of Providence (6th ed. 1680).[130] Although he accounted for evil through free-will, Wesley thought it was 'a childish conceit to suppose chance governs the world, or has any part in the government of it',[131] and cites Cicero in developing his argument for providence.[132] He knew that some would look upon providence as 'enthusiasm', but said nonetheless,

> I know not what things[...]which are not owing to the providence of God; in ordering, or at least in governing, of which this is not either directly or remotely concerned. I expect nothing but sin; and even in the sins of others I see the providence of God to *me*. I do not say, his *general providence*,[133] for this I take to be a sounding world which means just nothing. And if there be a *particular providence* it must extend to all persons and all things. So our Lord understood it, or he could never have said, 'Even the hairs of your head are all numbered.' And, 'Not a sparrow falleth to the ground' without 'the will of your Father which is in heaven.' But if it be so, if God presides *universis tanquam singulis, et singulis tanquam universis*- over the whole universe as over every single person, over every single person as over the whole universe-[134] what is it (except only our own sins) which we are not to ascribe to the providence of God?[135]

Through providence God presided over the 'chain of being', from top to bottom. After God's universal providence, he developed Thomas Crane's notion of a 'threefold circle' of providence- the outermost circle of general providence; the intermediate circle of special or limited providence given to the visible church; and the inmost circle of peculiar providence

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[130] Outler, BEW, II, 534.

[131] 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 577.

[132] Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods, II.XXX.75, in 'On Divine Providence' (1786), BEW, II, 535; 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 578.

[133] cf. 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 132.

[134] Also, 'On Eternity' (1786), BEW, II, 372. Cf. Augustine, 'Confessions' (397-401), III.xi.19 (NPNF1 I, 67). See also, BEW, II, 57 note 45.

[135] 'The Nature of Enthusiasm' (1750), BEW, II, 56-7.

given to the elect only.[136] God often mediated providential care through 'guardian angels', who were able to deliver souls from danger, temptation, and even pain.[137]

The full extent of Wesley's understanding of providence can be seen in his introduction to, A Concise History of England, from the earliest times, To the Death of George II (1776).

> There is yet another objection which may be made, to all the Histories of England which I have seen: (I mean the General Histories; for this objection does not lie against several particular Histories; such as Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, or Mr. Neal's History of the Puritans) that is, they seem calculated only for Atheists; for there is nothing about GOD in them. Who would gather from these accounts, who would have the least suspicion, that it is GOD who governs the world? That his kingdom ruleth over all, in Heaven above, and in Earth beneath? That he alone changeth the times and the seasons, removeth kings and setteth up kings, and disposes all things by his almighty power, according to the counsels of his own will? [...]Who takes GOD into his account, or seems to think, he has any concern in the transactions of the lower world? I wish to habituate the readers of English History, to a nobler way of thinking: as I desire myself to see GOD pervading the moral, as well as the natural world, so I would fain have others to see him, in all civil events, as well as in all the Phaenomena of nature. I want them to learn that the Lord is King, be the earth never so impatient: that he putteth down one and setteth up another, in spite of all human power and wisdom. Let there be at least one History of England, which uniformly acknowledges this: let there be one Christian History, of what is still called (tho' by a strong figure) a Christian Country.[138]

While Scripture was the record of God's revelation in history, history, in turn, was seen by Wesley as the record of providences. Through providence, history may be seen as the context of salvation history. So prominent and obvious was providence in history and civil events, they were just as much a means of natural

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[136] Thomas Crane, Isagoge ad Dei Providentiam, Or a Prospect of Divine Providence (1672), XXIV.i.271-72, in, BEW, II, 541.

[137] 'On Guardian Angels' (1726), BEW, IV, 227, 233.

[138] HE (1776), 'Preface', §§ 5, 9.

revelation as nature itself. This seems to suggest that for Wesley, the only freedom one really has is whether or not one accepts God's offer of forgiveness in Christ. The individual may well be in control of his or her eternal destiny, but God is in control of the destiny of humanity and history as a whole. In this way providence could be seen as the banks of river, guiding the river's course to its eventual end.

How this could be so can be explained by God's particular election of certain individual persons for a prescribed task. In 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752) he stated,

> I will tell you, in all plainness and simplicity. I believe it [election] commonly means one of these two things: First, a divine appointment of some particular men, to do some particular work in the world. And this election I believe to be not only personal, but absolute and unconditional. Thus Cyrus was elected to rebuild the temple, and St. Paul, with the twelve, to preach the gospel. But I do not find this to have any necessary connexion with eternal happiness. Nay, it is plain it has not; for one who is elected in this sense may yet be lost eternally. 'Have I not chosen' (elected) 'you twelve?' saith our Lord; 'Yet one of you hath a devil.' Judas, you see, was elected as well as the rest; yet is his lot with the devil and his angels.
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> 17. I believe election means, Secondly, a divine appointment of some men to eternal happiness. But I believe this election to be conditional, as well as the reprobation opposite thereto. I believe the eternal decree concerning both is expressed in those words: 'He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.' And this decrees, without doubt, God will not change, and man cannot resist.[138]

In short, providential election did not assure perseverance of an individual saint. Only the perseverance of faith could do that. All of which seems to indicate that for Wesley, some things must happen by necessity, while others happen only contingently. Without a certain measure of providential necessity human events would career wildly out of control. Conversely, too

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[138] 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), in, Works, X, 210.

much providential necessity negates any concept of free-will.

4.2. Free-Will and the Paradox of Omniscience

Apart from the paradox of omnipotence, there is also the paradox of omniscience.[140] This arises from the problem of how God's perfect knowledge can be consistent with the divine and eternal nature, and human free-will, presupposing that God's omniscience must also include foreknowledge of all future events. Wesley admitted to a certain frustration with the paradox saying, 'if any one asks, 'How is God's foreknowledge consistent with our freedom?' I plainly answer, I cannot tell.'[141]

4.2.1. Omniscience and the 'Eternal Now'

Still, this did not deter him from trying to find a model in which free-will was compatible with Divine foreknowledge. In trying to find a solution to the problem, like Augustine, Wesley attempted to protect God's omniscience by arguing that God's foreknowledge is not inconsistent with free will, saying,

> But in order to throw light upon this dark question it should be well observed that when we speak of God's *foreknowledge* we do not speak according to the nature of things, but after the manner of men. For if we speak properly there is no such thing as either *foreknowledge* or *after-knowledge* in God. All time, or rather all eternity[...]being present to him at once, he does not know one thing before another, or one thing after another, but sees all things in one point of view, from everlasting to everlasting[...]. But observe: we must not think they *are* because he *knows* them. No; he knows them because they are. Just as I[...]now know the sun shines. Yet the sun does not shine because I know it: but

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[140] Although Frederick Sontag has argued 'Omnipotence Need not Entail Omniscience', Sophia, 29(1990)3, 35-39.

[141] BEW, XXVI, 517 (1753), and see note 2. This was in response to Andrew Ramsay's proposition in, Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, unfolded in a Geometrical Order (2 vols., 1748-49), that 'It was equally a matter of free choice and will in God to think of finite ideas as to create finite substances' (I, 143-52).

> I know it because he shines[...]. In like manner God knows that man sins; for he knows all things. Yet we do not sin because he knows it: but he knows it because we sin.[142] And his knowledge *supposes* our sin, but does not in any wise *cause* it[...]. The sum of all is this: the almighty all-wise God sees and knows from everlasting to everlasting all that is, that was, and that is to come, through one eternal now.[143]

Wesley often used the scholastic distinction of describing eternity as being '*a parte ante*' and '*a parte post*', the 'eternity which is past, and the eternity which is to come' (which was also developed by Locke).[144] God alone is eternal in both of these senses.[145] Time itself was a concept created only by an act of creation and will continue as long as the world endures and then expire.[146] As a part of creation it is other than God, who transcends temporality. Eternality, not temporality, is an attribute of God. Although transcendent of temporality God knows all things which exist or occur within temporality simultaneously, through one 'eternal now'. In this view, God's eter-

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[142] Cf. Justin, 'Expositiones Quaestionum a Gentibus Christianis Propositarum', Q. 58; Origen, 'Commentary on Romans', 8.30.

[143] 'On Predestination' (1773), BEW, II, 417, 420. Cf. 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), Works, X, 210; cf. 'A Dialogue Between a Predestinarian and His Friend' (1741), Works, X, 261; cf. Calvin, Institutes, III.xxiii.7. It is interesting to note that the phrase, 'eternal now' was also used by Tillich in his own Systematic Theology (1963), III, 395-6, and in a sermon by the same title, The Eternal Now (1963), pp. 122-32. His use was more of an eschatological manifestation of an eternal existentialism, in which we have neither past or future, only an eternal now, in which the flux of time has ceased. This will be our experience of the eternal.

[144] 'On Eternity' (1786), BEW, II, 358-9 and n; cf. 'On the Eternity of God', AM, 8(1785), 634-37, 'In the pure and absolute essence of God, and in the exercise of his essential immanent, and necessary acts, there can be neither past, nor future. All is one present moment. Because God always knows and loves himself equally without variation and shadow of change. All his essential acts are co-eternal, consubstantial, and simultaneous with his essence.' Locke, Essay, II.xvii.10-22; Samuel Clarke (1675-1729), A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God (1705); and Joseph Addison, The Evidences of the Christian Religion (1730). For a Platonic reference see 'Phaedo', Dialogues of Plato (1937), I, 461 ff. Cf. Augustine, 'Confessions', 11.13-18.

[145] 'On Eternity' (1786), BEW, II, 359; cf. 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 61-2.

[146] 'On Eternity' (1786), BEW II, 360.

nality is equated with omniscience.[147] Because God is temporally transcendent, all knowledge is known to God simultaneously. Through the concept of the 'eternal now' compatibility between God's omniscience and human free-will could be maintained. Wesley thought it was possible for God to observe human action from the eternal now without determining it.

Although the footnotes are quite copious and extremely helpful in making the historical connections otherwise, it is odd that in the footnotes supporting this passage Outler did not point out the concept's connections with sources such as Origen, Boethius,[148] Augustine, and Aquinas. Origen spoke of the Trinity transcending temporality, meaning the Trinity's intelligence is not measured by times and ages.[149] Augustine's development of the concept was more significant and comprehensive.[150] Augustine saw time as a creation of God. As a creation of God, time is not to be seen as co-eternal with God. The nature of God's eternality is that all time (time past, present, and future) is present to God at once.[151] Since all things are present to God at once there is no time-scale of God's knowledge, no foreknowledge or after-knowledge. From the 'eternal now' God is able to see the outcome of human choice and responsibility, not determine it. As Craig has summarized it,

> Adam was free to choose things above or things below. God foreknew what he was going to choose, and therefore it was certain that choice would occur. But God's knowing about it in advance in no way influenced the choice; Adam could have chosen either option. Whichever alternative he chose, God would have foreknown. In fact, God's foreknowledge that Adam freely chose one guarantees that Adam would *freely* choose one. It is necessary that whatever God foreknows should come to pass,

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[147] cf. 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 62.
[148] Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, V.vi.
[149] Origen, 'De Principiis', IV.i.28.
[150] See Augustine, 'Confessions' 11.14-20, 31; 'On Free Choice of the Will', III.iv.
[151] Augustine, Confessions, XI.xxxi.41; cf. 'On the Gospel of John', Tractate XXXI.5.

> but this necessity is not antithetical to human liberty. For though it is necessary that whatever God foreknows should happen, what is going to happen does not happen of necessity. What is going to happen is causally indeterminate and therefore free. Therefore, the origin of evil lies only in Adam's free choice, and God's foreknowledge of that choice in no way rendered it necessary; hence, God is just in punishing man for his sins.[152]

In this way the paradox of omniscience is resolved by giving God foreknowledge of human decisions without God's foreknowledge determining those decisions.

Aquinas had addressed the same issue in, Summa Theologiae.[153] There, Aquinas 'uses perceptual models to explain his contention that all temporal things- past, present, and future- are present to God in eternity and hence that future contingents are known by Him as present rather than as future.'[154] But Aquinas also knew that once God had knowledge of such an event, it would necessarily happen. The inconsistency between free-will and foreknowledge was pointed out when Aquinas said,

> the following is a conditional that is true: *If God knew that this is going to happen it will happen-* because knowledge is only of what is true. And its antecedent is absolutely necessary: first, because it is eternal, and also because it is expressed as having taken place. Therefore whatever is known by God is necessary.[155]

What is at issue is whether events determine God's knowledge, or if God's knowledge determines events. Wesley's position was clearly evident in the quote above. As he succinctly summarized it, 'We do not sin

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[152] Craig, The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge (1988), p.73.

[153] Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, 1a, Q. 14, A. 13,

[154] Freddoso, On Divine Foreknowledge (1988), p. 7.

[155] Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, 1a.14 art. 13. See also Geach, Providence and Evil (1977); Anthony Kenny, 'Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom', in Aquinas, ed. Anthony Kenny (1969); Prior, Past, Present and Future (1967). Craig, 'Aquinas on God's Knowledge of Future Contingents', Thomist, 54(1990) 1, 33-79, who said, 'If a theological fatalist is someone who believes that God's foreknowledge of future events is incompatible with contingency and human freedom, then Thomas Aquinas was a theological fatalist'.

because he knows it: but he knows it because we sin.' For Wesley, events, which were viewed by God from the eternal now, determined God's knowledge.

One modern discussion of this type of argument offers a way in which this may be understood. It attempts to explain the problem of foreknowledge and free-will through 'backward causation'. 'Backward causation' is 'a kind of *a posteriori* knowledge acquired by means of the operation of temporally backwards causality. The future event causes the past foreknowledge of it', and is an argument used by Anglin, Dummett, Flew, and Scriven among others.[156] From backward causality Kenny has concluded,

> if we imagine God as exercising reverse causation as frequently as would be necessary to provide an explanation of omniscient foreknowledge of free human actions then the distinction between past and future again becomes blurred.[157]

But Wesley's view is God is timeless and creation is temporal. If that is so, 'Indeed, why would God have to exercise reverse causation more than once? Why could he not simply wait until the end of Time and then make it have been the case that he always knew what he will then know (at the end of Time) simply from having observed it?'[158] God's omniscience, derived from reverse causation, makes the category of time obsolete, dissolving the boundaries between past, present, and future. There is no conjugation of the tenses of 'knowing'. In God's omniscience there is no 'I have known', no 'I will know', no 'I will have known', only 'I know'. There is only a simultaneous knowledge of everything 'now', throughout eternity, which seems to be Wesley's point.

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[156] See, Anglin, Free Will (1990), p. 81; Dummett and Flew, 'Can an Effect Precede Its Cause?', AS Supplementary Volume, 28(1954), 27-62; Michael Dummett, 'Bringing about the Past', Philosophical Review, 73(1964), 338-59, and 'Causal Loops', in The Nature of Time, ed. Raymond Flood and Michael Lockwood (1986), pp. 135-69; Scriven, 'Randomness and the Causal Order', Analysis, 17 (1956), 5-9.

[157] Kenny, God of the Philosophers (1979), pp. 103-9.

[158] Anglin, Free Will (1990), p. 91. The problem with this view is that God's knowledge then becomes dependent upon human will and action.

In this way God's omniscience and human free will are made compatible by God's eternality.

But one problem with this view is that the past also determines the future. If God looks at the beginning from the end, the past is still necessary, although its events are determined by the outcome of free-will, and not God's foreknowledge. The eternal now on its own does not completely solve the problem of determinism.

4.2.2. Omniscience and 'Middle Knowledge'

It was not just on the basis of God's eternal knowledge of things temporal that free will and omniscience could be reconciled. There was also a second, and more obscure way in which Wesley sought to resolve the paradox of omniscience. It is revealed less in his sermons, and more in the Arminian Magazine through a collection of works he extracted there.

In the first volume of the Arminian Magazine Wesley extracted three of four essays found in, A Collection of Tracts Concerning Predestination and Providence, and the other Points Depending on Them (1719). The editor(s?) of this publication, which was published in Cambridge, were anonymous. The volume consisted of John Plaifere's, An Appeal to the Gospel, for the True Doctrin [sic] of Divine Predestination, Concorded with the Orthodox Doctrin of God's Free-Grace, and Man's Free-Will (1651); Barnaby Potter's, A Letter of the Learned Chr. Potter, D.D. Vindicating his Sentiments in these Controversies (which had been published together in a single volume with Plaifere in 1651); Thomas Goad's, The Disputation concerning the Necessity and Contingency of Events, in respect of God's Eternal Decrees (originally published as, Stimluus Orthodoxus; Sive Goadus Redivivus. A Disputation Partly Theological, partly Methaphysical, concerning the Necessity and Contingency of Events in the World, in respect of God's Eternal Decree in 1661 as an appendix to Laurence Womack's, The Result of False Principles: or, Error Convinced. Managed in several Dialogues[...] Whereunto

is added a learned Disputation of Dr. Goades, sent by King James to the Synod of Dort); and Laurence Womack's, The Examination of Tilenus before the Triers in Utopia (1658). The only work in this collection not extracted by Wesley in the first volume of the Arminian Magazine was Potter's. Of the three which appear, the works by Goad and Plaifere are the most significant to our discussion here.

Goad, once provost at King's College Cambridge, was a delegate sent to the Synod of Dort by King James as a substitute for the ailing Joseph Hall. It has been popularly assumed that Goad went there a Calvinist and returned an Arminian. However, Tyacke has shown that this is not 'borne out by the original records'.[159] In the 1620's Goad wrote and licensed books against the Arminian point of view. The only 'evidence' that Goad had eventually changed his views is based on the posthumous publication of Stimulus Orthodoxus in 1661. It is there that Goad's doctrinal shift is speculated upon by the editor.[160] What is interesting is that Tyacke concluded that this work, 'a discussion of the necessity and contingency of events, only indirectly concerns the Arminian controversy and is moreover compatible with a Calvinist stance on the points in question at Dort.'[161] This hardly seems likely when one realizes that that work utilized a concept employed by the anti-Calvinists in both the Catholic and Arminian positions, namely the concept of the 'middle point' between necessity and contingency.[162] Goad had said,

> The Sum of the Controversy is this: *Whether all things that ever have or shall come to pass in the World, have been, or shall be effected* necessarily, *in respect of an* irresistible Decree, *by which God hath everlastingly* determined, *that they should* inevitably *come to pass*[...]. *Whether many*

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[159] Tyacke, Anti-Calvinists (1987), p. 99.
[160] Tyacke, Anti-Calvinists (1987), pp. 99-100.
[161] Tyacke, Anti-Calvinists (1987), p. 100.
[162] This concern with future contingents was also raised in 'A Treatise concerning Election and Reprobation', AM, 2(1779), 161 ff, 217 ff, 273 ff, 329 ff, 385 ff, 441 ff. Unfortunately there is not enough space to evaluate it here.

> *things have not been done* contingently, *or after such a middle Manner between* impossibility *of being, and* necessity *of being, that some things which have been, might as well not have been, and many things which have not been, might as well have been, for aught God hath decreed to the contrary.*[163]

To Goad things were either done necessarily, or contingently. Goad was convinced that God's omniscience must consist of an infinity of knowledge.[164] By limiting God's knowledge to only things that must necessarily take place, God's knowledge is limited, hence finite. However, by expanding God's knowledge to incorporate contingent events it becomes infinite. This

> makes his *Prescience* more wonderful. God, say we, *ab aterno*, hath ordered that such *Agents* as he created *Voluntarily*, should have a double *Liberty* in their Operations, viz., a *Liberty of Contradiction*, to do, or not to do; as a Painter may choose whether he will work or no: and a *Liberty of Contrariety*, to do a thing after this or that manner; as a Painter may use what colours, in what quantity, after what passion he pleaseth.
>
> Now God leaving to his Creatures free Liberty to work or not work after this or that manner, so that for any necessity imposed upon their Actions by him, whatsoever they *omit* was possible to be done, as what they did. And yet from all Eternity, *Fore-knowing* whatsoever his Creatures would do, or not do, his *Fore-Knowledge* must needs in *Infinite*, and most admirable[...]. And indeed this *Fore-sight* of future Contingents, is the true Character and Royal *Prerogative* of Divine Knowledge[...].[165]

Knowledge of the contingent was created by the Scholastic distinctions of liberty of contrariety and contradiction. This knowledge of the contingent was for Goad the middle point between what must necessarily come to be and what is possible. This knowledge was infinite. Goad was convinced that without this middle

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[163] 'A Discourse concerning the Necessity and Contingency of Events in the World, in Respect of God's Eternal Decrees. By Thomas Goad, D.D. [Wrote about the Year 1620.]' AM 1(1778), 250-64, 289-302.

[164] cf. a similar view which is more fully developed in 'On the Eternity of God' AM 3(1780), 33-41. I have been unable to trace this otherwise anonymous source.

[165] AM 1(1778), 262.

path one must either walk on the path of Stoicism (i.e. determinism) or Epicurianism (i.e. where everything is by chance). What is most important for our purposes is that by extracting Goad's work Wesley introduced to his readers the concept of 'middle point'. In doing so he was trying to solve the paradox of omniscience.

The concept of the middle point, was explained in greater detail in Plaifere's work who understood it to be 'scientia media', or middle knowledge.[166] In his work Plaifere demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the issue, both historically and philosophically.[167] He put forward five opinions about predestination. After showing the weaknesses of the first four he then suggested a fifth, the position he defended as the most correct one. In a passage extracted by Wesley, and later referred to in the London Edition of Arminius's Works, Plaifere said,

> The Fifth Opinion is that of Arminius, which he interpreted according to his own principles, in his *Theses de natura Dei*, and of Vorstius in his *Treatis de Deo*, and the Jesuits Molina, Vasquez, Suarez, Becanus, and others; and may therefore be less acceptable to some for the sake of the Teachers and Defenders of it; but a lover of Truth will not be prejudiced against it, because it hath besides these, the unanimous suffrage of the Fathers, Greek and Latin, before St. Augustine, if their Doctrine concerning Prescience be rightly examined, and explained, namely.

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[166] Although Wesley's extract of Plaifere did not appear until 1778-79, he was acquainted with it as early as 1731, when he read Thomas Bennet's, Directions for Studying I. A General System or Body of Divinity. II. The Thirty nine Articles of Religion[...] (1714). In the Introduction of, A Collection of Tracts Concerning Predestination, Bennet's work was appreciated as one that pointed out the work by Plaifere. Arminius was quoted by Bennet at some length from 'A Declaration of the Sentiments of Arminius[...]', on pages 95-99. Bennet and the editor of, A Collection of Tracts were both obviously profoundly influenced by Plaifere's work and its understanding of Arminianism/Molinism and bore its imprint in regards to the knowledge of God and predestination.

[167] 'An Appeal to the Gospel for the true Doctrine of Divine Predestination, concorded with the Orthodox Doctrine of God's Free-Grace, and Man's Free Will. By John Plaifere, B.D. [Wrote about the Year 1630].' AM 1(1778), 302ff, 337ff, 385ff, 433ff, 489ff, 545ff; 2(1779), 1ff, 49ff.

> 1. That God by his infinite Understanding, from all Eternity, knew all things possible to be.
> 2. That among other infinite things possible, in his understanding, he conceived all this frame of the World that now is, and in it all the race of Mankind from the first Man to the last, every one in his several Order, Government and Event, only as possible to be, if he would say the word.
> 3. That he knew how to alter the ordering either of all, or of any part, or person in the race of Men, so as other effects, and other ends than those that now are, might be brought forth, if he would otherwise order them.
> 4. But that, considering this frame of the World, and order of Mankind (as now it is) he judged it was exceeding Good for the Manifestation of the Glory of his Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Mercy, Justice, Dominion, and Lordship, if he should Will, or Decree to put it into Execution, and into Being.
> 5. That God infallibly foreknew, that if he should decree to put it into execution, that then these, and these particular persons, would certainly, by this order of Means and Government, be transmitted, and brought to Eternal Life; and that those other particular Persons, under their order of Means and Government, through their own fault would go into Perdition, if Justice should be done them.
> 6. That though he knew, what these would be, yet he determined and decreed, out of his own absolute Will and Pleasure to say, Fiat, be it so; and to put into Execution, and into being, all this which he had in his Understanding: and in so doing, he Predestinated all Men either to Life or Death Eternal.[188]

Plaifere understood predestination to take place on the basis of middle knowledge. God considered all things that were possible. From the realm of the possible God knew that if grace were offered to certain individuals they would reject it, while others would accept it. In explaining middle knowledge, or 'scientia media', what is astonishing is that Plaifere quoted both Arminius, and Molina as proponents of middle knowledge. Perhaps our understanding of the concept, and the significance

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[188] AM 1(1778), 307-8. Cf. 'Preface' of Arminius' Works (1825), I, lvi-lvii.

of its appearance here would be more accurate if we examined Arminius and Molina on the matter.

4.2.3. Arminius and Molina on 'Middle Knowledge'

What Arminius thought regarding the knowledge, or understanding, of God may be found in his 'Disputations on Some of the Principal Subjects of the Christian Religion' (1610), under Disputation IV, 'On the Nature of God'. By this knowledge, or understanding, God knows

> all things and every thing which now have, will have, have had, can have, or might hypothetically have, any kind of being[...] God therefore understands himself: He knows all things possible, whether they be in the capability of God or of the creature; in active or passive capability; in the capability of operation, imagination, or enunciation: He knows all things that could have an existence, on laying down any hypothesis[...].[169]

God has this knowledge through 'infinite intuition', by which God knows all things from eternity, nothing recently[...] whether they be considered as future, as past, or as present'.[170] Such an understanding is certain, undeceived, and infallible, even with regards to future contingents.[171] Yet, the certainty of such knowledge 'does not impose any necessity on things, nay, it rather establishes in them a contingency'.[172] At this point Arminius described the nature of God's knowledge which accommodates such a notion. God's simple knowledge may be distinguished by several modes- theoretical and practical knowledge, and vision and simple intelligence.[173]

> *XLI. Theoretical knowledge* is that by which things are understood under the relation of Being and of Truth. *Practical knowledge* is that by which things are considered under the relation of Good, and as objects of the Will and of the Power of God. (Isa. xlii, 8; xxxvii, 28; svi, 5.)

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[169] Arminius, Works (1825), II, 120.
[170] Arminius, Works (1825), II, 121-2.
[171] Arminius, Works (1825), II, 122.
[172] Arminius, Works (1825), I, 123.
[173] Arminius, Works (1825), II, 123.

> XLII. *The knowledge of Vision* is that by which God knows himself and all other beings, which are, will be, or have been. *The knowledge of simple Intelligence* is that by which He knows things possible. Some persons call the former 'definite' or 'determinate,' and the latter 'indefinite' or 'indeterminate' knowledge.
> XLIII. The Schoolmen say besides, that one kind of God's knowledge is natural and necessary, another free, and a third kind [mediam] middle. (1.) *Natural* or *necessary knowledge* is that by which God understands himself and all things possible. (2.) *Free Knowledge* is that by which He knows all other beings. (3.) *Middle Knowledge* is that by which he knows, that 'if this thing happens, that will take place.' The first precedes every free act of the Divine Will; the second follows the free act of God's will; and the last precedes indeed the free act of the Divine Will, but hypothetically from this act it sees that some particular thing will occur.[174]

Here Arminius clearly elucidated three kinds of Divine knowledge- natural, free, and middle. But Plaifere saw a distinct link between Arminius and Molina on these points.

He was right in doing so. These were the exact distinctions made by Luis de Molina (1535-1600) in his, Liberi Arbitrii cum Tratiae Donis, Divina Praescientia, Providentia, Praedestnatione et Preprobatione Concordia (1588).[175] Molina was convinced that, 'Unless we want

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[174] Arminius, Works (1825), I, 123-4.

[175] This was the first edition. A second and revised edition was published in Antwerp in 1595. All of section IV was also found in parallel form in, Commentaria in Primam Divi Thomae Partem, which was published in 1592, see, Molina, Concordia (1988), p. ix. There has been a renewed interest in Molina in the last 20 years, as the following list of works relating to Molina reveals: Kretzmann, CHRP, p. 826; Plantinga, The Nature of Necessity (Oxford, 1974), Chapter 9; Plantinga, 'Reply to Robert Adams', in Alvin Plantinga Profiles (Dordrecht, 1985); Kvanvig, The Possibility of an All-Knowing God (New York, 1986); Costello, The Political Philosophy of Luis de Molina, S.J. (1535-1600) (Rome, 1974); Zagzebski, The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge (New York, 1991), pp. 125-52; Langston, God's Willing Knowledge: The Influence of Scotus' Analysis of Omniscience (University Park, 1986), pp. 55-74; Craig, The Problem of Divine Foreknowldged and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez (Leiden, 1988), pp. 169-206; Craig, The Only Wise God (Ithaca, 1989); Craig, '"Lest Anyone Should Fall": A Middle Knowledge Perspective on Perseverance and Apostolic Warnings', Int J
(continued...)

to wander about precariously in reconciling our freedom of choice and the contingency of things with divine foreknowledge, it is necessary for us to distinguish *three* types of knowledge in God.'[176] Scientia media was only one of three ways in which Molina discussed the knowledge of God. Molina's first sort of divine knowledge was God's natural knowledge. This knowledge consisted not just of individuals but of all the possible actions and circumstances associated with individuals. Although this knowledge of all future contingents existed before 'He created anything by His free will', it is not dependent upon His will.[177] Such knowledge is a divine attribute and essential to God, which is why it is called 'natural'.

The third kind of Divine knowledge was God's free knowledge,

> by which, *after* the free act of His will, God knew *absolutely* and *indeterminately, without any condition or hypothesis*, which ones from among all the contingent states of affairs were *in fact* going to obtain and, likewise, which ones were not going to obtain.[178]

Once again, Craig's observations and comments on this point are as lucid as they are helpful.

> This knowledge is posterior to the free decision of God's will to create, to instantiate one of the possible orders known by His natural knowledge[...]. Since his knowledge is posterior to the decision of God's will and since God's decision to create this world is free, it follows that the content of free knowledge is not essential to divine omniscience, but is contingent upon which world God in fact creates. Had God created different

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[175](...continued)
Phil Religion, (1991), 65-74; Walls, 'Is Molinism as Bad as Calvinism?' Faith Phil 7(1990)1, 85-98; Morris, editor, 'Two Accounts of Providence' in, Divine and Human Action (Ithica, 1989) pp. 147-181; Felt, 'Impossible Worlds', Int Phil Quart 23(1983), 251-266; Hamilton, Political Thought in Sixteenth-Century Spain (London, 1963); examples of opposition to Molina may be seen in Hasker, God, Time, and Knowledge (Ithaca, 1989), pp. 15-52; Adams, 'Middle Knowledge and the Problem of Evil', Amer Phil Quart, 14(1977), 109-117; Adams, 'Middle Knowledge', J Phil 70(1973), 552-554.

[176] Molina, Concordia (1988), 4.52.9.

[177] Molina, Concordia (1988), 4.49.11.

[178] Molina, Concordia (1988), 4.52.9.

> worlds or even no world at all, the content of His free knowledge would have been different. So while it is essential to God to have free knowledge, the content of what He freely knows is contingent upon which world He chooses to create.[179]

In between these two types of Divine knowledge, the first and third, is what Molina simply called,

> *middle* knowledge, by which, in virtue of the most profound and inscrutable comprehension of each faculty of free choice, He saw in His own essence what each such faculty would to with its innate freedom were it to be placed in this or in that or, indeed, in infinitely many orders of things- even though it would really be able, if it so willed, to do the opposite[...].[180]

Whereas by God's natural knowledge God knew what an individual *could* do if placed in a particular set of circumstances, by middle knowledge God knew what an individual *would* do when placed in the same particular set of circumstances. It is, as Craig has pointed out,

> God's middle knowledge which thus provides the basis of God's foreknowledge of contingent events in the actual world. By knowing what every possible creature would do under any possible circumstances and by willing to establish a world order containing certain circumstances, God knows what will in fact take place in the world.[181]

As Molina himself said,

> Therefore[...]we affirm that through the divine ideas (or, through the divine essence known as the primary object) all contingent states of affairs are represented with certainty to God, who comprehends in the deepest and most eminent way both His own essence and all things, each of which is contained in that essence infinitely more perfectly than it is contained in itself. All contingent states of affairs are, I repeat, represented to God *naturally*, *before* any act or free determination of the divine will; and they are represented not only as being *possible* but also as being *future*- not *absolutely future*, but *future under the*

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[179] Craig, Divine Foreknowledge (1988), p. 174. At this point there are similarities between God's natural and free knowledge, and Leibniz's view of the 'best of all possible worlds'. See, Sontag, 'Omnipotence need not Entail Omniscience', Sophia, 29(1990), 35-39.

[180] Molina, Concordia (1988), 4.52.9.

[181] Craig, Divine Foreknowledge (1988), p. 177.

> *condition and on the hypothesis* that God should decide to create this or that order of things and causes with these or those circumstances[...]. [O]nce that determination is made, God knows all the contingent states of affairs with certainty as being future *simply and absolutely*, and now *without any hypothesis or condition*.[182]

In an argument reminiscent of the one seen in relation to the eternal now, Molina argued on this basis God may have knowledge of an event without determining it. Molina quoted Justin Martyr who said,

> Foreknowledge is not a cause of that which is going to be, but rather that which is going to be is a cause of foreknowledge. For that which is going to be does not ensue upon foreknowledge, but rather foreknowledge ensues upon that which is going to be.[183]

This, of course, was precisely the point Wesley was trying to make through his concept of the eternal now, a concept which may be traced to Augustine. However, what Augustine lacked was an understanding of Divine knowledge which could account for the compatibility of Divine foreknowledge and human free-will. Molina provided this missing concept, which he called middle knowledge. It was to this concept Wesley eventually turned through his extractions of Goad, and Plaifere.

Goad and Plaifere were both profoundly influenced not just by Arminian thought, but by Molinism also. Implicit to this influence is the relationship between Molina and Arminius. It obviously is one that must be explored, particularly now that a critical translation of Molina has been made available. It is perhaps unfortunate that the white heat of the Arminian controversy obviously eclipsed the light of Molina, at least where Protestants were concerned.

While there is no evidence to suggest Wesley had more than just a casual acquaintance with the 'free-will' controversy between the Dominicans and the Jesuits

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[182] Molina, Concordia (1988), 4.50.15.

[183] Justin Martyr, 'Expositiones Quaestionum a Gentibus Christianis Propositarum', Q. 58 (PG 6, 1300C), in Molina, Concordia (1988), 4.52.21; cf. Origen, 'Commentary on Romans 8' [8.30] (PG 14, 1126C-D).

precipitated by Molina's work in the sixteenth century (for example, there is no reference to Molina in his Ecclesiastical History), there is enough to suggest that he had a fuller understanding of the position of 'scientia media' as taken by Molina against the Dominicans.[184] There seems to have at least been a connection between Arminius, Molina, mediated to Wesley through Goad and Plaifere. Consequently, Wesley attempted to reconcile the paradox of omniscience not just by Arminianism, but also by Molinism. The presence of both the 'eternal now', and 'middle knowledge' as ways of trying to reconcile the paradox of omniscience indicates Wesley's struggle to deal with the issue.

4.3. Compatiblism, Prayer, and Prophecy

Just as one final remark, perhaps something needs to be said about compatiblism, prayer, and prophecy. While offering a free-will defense in order to account for the problem of evil, Wesley obviously also maintained compatibility with the omnipotence and omniscience of God. Such a view is perhaps the best way one can reconcile even Wesley's views on prophecy, and prayer.[185] If everything is predetermined, what good is it to offer prayers of petition and intercession?[186] If nothing is predetermined, what truth is there in prophecy, which was for Wesley, 'in the proper sense of the word[...]foretelling things to come'?[187] In this way an omnipotent, and omniscient God could providentially lead the course of human history, making prophecy valid. At the same time God is able to answer prayers

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[184] Outler, BEW, I, 78.

[185] See Hasker, God, Time, and Knowledge (1989), pp. 190-97.

[186] 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 284-85; 'On Visiting the Sick' (1786), BEW, III, 391-92; 'Sermon on the Mount, VI' (1748), I, 577-89; 'Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving' (1746, nos. 83, 159, 366 in BEW, VII); 'Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind' (1758, nos. 55, 429-32!, 439 in BEW, VII); 'For Believers Interceding for the World', nos. 429-65, BEW, VII).

[187] 'The More Excellent Way' (1787), BEW, III, 263; cf. 'On Charity' (1784), BEW, III, 301-3. It is interesting to compare this understanding of prophecy with the Ranters and Quakers understanding in Smith, Perfection Proclaimed (1989), pp. 23-72.

of petition and intercession because not everything has been eternally determined, especially the eternal destinations of individuals, which could be decided only by the free choice of individuals to believe or not.

5. Conclusion

In answer to his question, 'Unde malum?' Wesley concluded the will unraveled the whole mystery. Without any concept of free-will God is responsible for evil, and the author of sin. This means his concern for free-will (which was later labeled 'Arminianism') arose not from a soteriological concern, but from the issue of theodicy. Wesley's aesthetic theme of the perfect goodness of creation means he ultimately rejected the notion that evil was to be equated with the defectibility of matter. Logically, Wesley could not have held to such a notion as found in either King, or Jenyns without creating severe pressures within his own Christian system. Had he done so, it would have been even more difficult for him to hold to his doctrine of entire sanctification, which included that of spirit, soul, and body. The body, as a part of the material world, is a part of God's creation. While the body currently suffers the punishment of the fall, it will be seen that to Wesley there is no such thing as 'sinful body'.

The doctrine of salvation becomes linked to the doctrine of creation. This presupposed two things. First, that matter actually exists as something more than a mere idea in the mind of God, but as an objective world apart from either God or the self, capable of being perceived by the senses. And secondly, that the matter that was created by God was more than capable of being good. It was good. This aesthetic view of creation was rooted in the ontological neutrality of matter. Instead of locating the cause of evil there, Wesley located it in morality, the preference of evil over good, the creature's will over the Creator's will. As simple, or as obvious as this may seem, it was

nonetheless an important epistemological and doctrinal development for Wesley.

While the free-will defense rescued God from responsibility for evil it did create other problems, namely the paradoxes of omnipotence and omniscience. Wesley's solution to the paradox of omnipotence was primarily the way in which he defined omnipotence, but it was also through his doctrine of providence. His solution to the paradox of omniscience was through the concept of the eternal now, and, in a more obscure way, through *scientia media*. His knowledge of Goad, and particularly of Plaifere suggests Wesley's knowledge was of Arminius, and Molina.

In addition to the paradox of omniscience and the paradox of omnipotence, there is also the problem of an omnipotent and omniscient God who foresaw Adam's fall and did nothing about it. Wesley's response to this was 'O felix culpa!' This was Wesley's final answer to the question 'Unde malum?'. His definitive solution to the problem of evil was the recapitulatory work of Christ. Theodicy, then is linked to original sin, which is in turn linked to Christology, which is in turn linked to soteriology with its existential and eschatological elements. While the answer to 'Whence came evil?' might be the will, 'Why was evil allowed?' is ultimately answered only through the Incarnation, the Cross, and the empty Tomb. For Wesley, the only way the doctrine of God can 'win' in the issue of theodicy is through 'Christus victor'.

Like Irenaeus, Wesley ultimately solved the problem of evil through the work of Christ and the renewal of the image of Christ in the soul of each Christian believer.[188] In that sense the question raised by 'Unde malum?' starts an investigation that will find its answer only through soteriology, and even eschatology. Through a trinitarian based Christology Wesley was able to maintain the omnipotence of, more specifically and significantly, the Triune God.

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[188] Surin, Theology and the Problem of Evil (1986), pp. 16-18.

Chapter Three
Wesley's Doctrine of Original Sin: 'The Loathsome Leprosy'

> Who then are the 'poor in spirit'? Without question, the humble; they who know themselves, who are convinced of sin[...]. One of these[...]has a deep sense of the loathsome leprosy of sin, which he brought with him from his mother's womb, which overspreads his whole soul, and totally corrupts every power and faculty thereof.[1]

1. Introduction

To Wesley it was obvious that something is wrong with humanity, and the sin of the angels was not enough to account for human pain and misery.[2] As far as he could see the world was filled with wickedness, hatred, and perversion. This was his opening argument in Part I of his, Doctrine of Original Sin.[3] He was convinced that simple empirical observation would easily establish the universality of sin. Sin could be seen everywhere.

> 'Look out of your own Doors: *Is there any evil in the city, and sin hath not done it?*[...]Sin in One or a few Cases, does not prove a sinful Nature: But Sin overspreading the Earth, does.'[4]

Going beyond his own personal experience he also used the epistemology of testimony to provide more evidence, and utilized a wide variety of authorities, ancient and modern, to further prove his point. He referred to the ancient near eastern histories of the Hebrews and the Egyptians, and also to the Greeks and Romans through the classics of Plato, Cato, Horace, Terrence, Lucian, Cicero, Juvenal, Virgil, Sallust,

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[1] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 477.

[2] DOS (1757), p. 252, in Works, IX, 324.

[3] The entire first section was later published separately, and anonymously under the sarcastic title, 'The Dignity of Human Nature' (1762).

[4] DOS (1757), p. 84, 252; in Works, IX, 236, 324; cf. 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 410, 'Open your eyes! Look around you! See darkness that may be felt[...]'.

Florus, and Ovid.[5] Furthermore, Wesley was convinced that the geographical explorations of his day, along with his own experiences among the native Americans, dispelled the myth of Pigafetta's 'noble savage'[6] whose life was enriched by a natural religion.[7] To strengthen this argument he cited the accounts of the explorer Lord Anson;[8] the missionary, Michael Geddes;[9] the geographer, Thomas Salmon;[10] the philologist, Edward Brerewood;[11] the Muslim, George Sale;[12] and literary figures such as Abraham Cowley[13], Matthew Prior,[14] and Jonathan Swift.[15] Wesley's conclusion from his empirical observations of cultural anthropology was that it all confirmed that the

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[5] In Part I of DOS Wesley cites the classics no less than 31 times. My thanks go to Dr. Frank Baker for generously sharing his text of DOS, which has been prepared for the BEW. It located 5 sources which I had not managed to trace. Wesley published his own extraction of the latin classics, 'Excerpta ex Ovidio, Virgilio, Horatio, Juvenali, Persio, et Martiali. In Usum Juventutis Christianae. Edidit Ecclesiae Presbyter' (Bristoliae: Farley, 1749); and 'Phaedri Fabulae Selectae. In Usum Juventutis Christianae' (Bristoliae: Farley, 1750).

[6] Willey, Eighteenth Century Background (1974), p. 12.

[7] See BEW, XVII, 165-67 (1736).

[8] George Anson, A Voyage Around the World[...] (1748) in DOS (1757), p. 44, in Works, IX, 215; cf. JWJ, IV, 139.

[9] Michael Geddes (1650-1713) was an Anglican missionary and chaplain to the English business community in Lisbon. Wesley read his Miscellaneous Tracts (1702-6), which contained 'View of the Inquisition in Portugal' in Feb. 1731 (see 'On Charity', BEW, III, 305, and note 67).

[10] Thomas Salmon, A New Geographical and Historical Grammar, 14th ed., Edinburgh (1771), p. 437, which Wesley quoted in DOS, p. 44, in Works, IX, 215. My thanks to the staff of the British Library for their immense help in locating this, only to later discover that Frank Baker had already traced the source.

[11] Edward Brerewood, Enquiries Touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions Through the Chief Parts of the Earth (1614), which Wesley cites in DOS, p. 32, in Works, IX, 208; 'The Great Assize', BEW, I, 361; 'The General Spread of the Gospel', BEW, II, 485.

[12] George Sale (Abdulla Omar), The Koran[...]Translated into English[...]with Notes (1734), which Wesley cited in DOS, p. 45, in Works, IX, 216.

[13] DOS, p. 52, in Works, IX, 220; cf. Abraham Cowley, Essays, No. 8, 'The Dangers of an Honest Man in much Company' (Works, 7th edn. London: Herringman, 1681, p. 132). My thanks again to Dr. Baker who found this and shared it with me.

[14] DOS, p. 34, in Works, IX, 210; cf. Prior, Alma, 937-42 (my thanks to Dr. Baker who gave me the precise location of this quote).

[15] See, Frank Baker, 'Jonathan Swift and the Wesleys', London Quarterly Holborn Review, October 1954, pp. 290-300, where he discusses the Wesley's unacknowledged use of Swift in the DOS.

aboriginal state was a heathenish and devilish one. Even the sociological evidence proved the educated and so-called cultured European societies were also universally infected by sin.[16] Universal human experience showed that sin,

> is at the Root of Trouble, and it is Unholiness which causes Unhappiness[...]Sin is the baleful source of Affliction; and consequently, the Flood of Miseries which covers the Face of the Earth, which overwhelms not only single Persons, but whole Families, Towns, Cities, Kingdoms, is a demonstrative Proof of the Overflowing of Ungodliness, in every Nation under Heaven.[17]

This affliction was so pervasive it infected all humanity and passed from generation to generation like a 'loathsome leprosy',[18] so that,

> The whole world is indeed, in its present state, only one great infirmary: all that are therein are sick of sin, and their one business there is to be healed.[19]

What is so particularly appropriate about this metaphor is that it depicts sickness, and uncleanness.[20] It prepares the way for one to understand Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification as healing, and purity, and also relationality which he expressed through love of God and neighbour. This corresponds with his view that true religion is rational religion and relational religion.

1.1. Accounting for Sin That is Seen

For Wesley, the problem was not whether there is sin in the world, but how to account for the sin that is obviously, and abundantly present. He was convinced it was not 'owing to bad *Education*, which propagates ill

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[16] cf. 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745).

[17] DOS, pp. 85, 87, in Works, IX, 237, 238.

[18] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 477. Cf. Wesley's extraction of Ralph Cudworth's sermon on 1 John 2.3,4 in AM, 5(1782), 420; BEW, VII, no. 135 v.8.

[19] 'The Trouble and Rest of Good Men' (1735), BEW, III, 533, and note 7.

[20] For an insight on the use of illness as metaphor see Sontag, Illness as Metaphor (1978).

Customs'.[21] The most rational explanation that could be given for this universal experience was the 'scripture doctrine' of original sin.[22] At this point he used scripture to account for what he observed. He summarized the scriptural doctrine in the following way:

> They ['the oracles of God'] teach us, That *in* Adam *all die*: [1 Cor. xv. 22, compared with Genesis 22. & iii.] That *by* the first *Man came* both natural and spiritual *Death*. That *by* this *one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death* in Consequence of *Sin: And* that from him *Death passed upon all Men, in that all have sinned.* [Rom. v. 12.][23]

This accounted for the universal human experience of original sin, and sin that could be seen. It also outlined many of the issues he would debate with, and defend against, John Taylor.

1.2. The Tradition He Defended

There were three creeds Wesley thought represented the scriptural doctrine of original sin, and consequently succinctly represented the creedal forms of his defended views on the subject. As either 'orthodoxy', or 'tradition', for Wesley they were accepted because they were based upon what he thought to be a right interpretation of Scripture. The first creedal source was the ninth Anglican article of religion on original sin, which he extracted in, 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743).[24] The second creedal source was the Westminster Assembly with both its Shorter Catechism which appeared in the Christian

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[21] DOS, p. 89, in Works, IX, 238.

[22] DOS, pp. 140, and 154 where he said, '[...]Experience and Reason do so strongly confirm this scriptural Doctrine of *Original Sin*', in Works, IX, 266, and 273.

[23] DOS, pp. 91-92, in Works, IX, 240. The scripture references in brackets appeared in Jackson, but not in Wesley. Cf. 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 173-74 for a more comprehensive statement of what Wesley thought to be the scripture doctrine; cf. DOS, pp. 428-30, in Works, IX, 415-16, Wesley's extraction of Samuel Hebden's understanding of the Scripture doctrine.

[24] BEW, XI, 112.

Library,[25] and the Assembly's Longer Catechism which he defended against Taylor's attacks. As Wesley saw it, the Longer Catechism was 'in the main a very excellent composition[...]grounded on clear Scripture'.[26] The third creedal source is perhaps the most significant of all three because it was written by Wesley himself. When he compiled the articles of faith for American Methodism in, 'The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America' (1784).[27] A textual comparison with the Anglican Ninth Article reveals a large influence on Wesley's own formulation of the doctrine. However, his defense of the Westminster Assembly's article on original sin indicates a Puritan sympathy and understanding of the doctrine.

In Wesley's own mind he was not just defending a creed. As we have already seen, Wesley was convinced he was defending a 'grand doctrine'[28] which served as a part of the foundational support to the 'superstructure' of the Christianity, which he 'considered as a system of doctrines'.[29] 'If, therefore, we take away this foundation[...]the Christian system falls at once[...]'.[30] Quite clearly Wesley thought systematically about the faith, even if he did not write in

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[25] 'An Extract from the Assembly's Shorter Catechism', in CL, 31(1753), 111-48; 'Minutes of Several Conversations[...]' (1789), Works, VIII, 314. For his regard of Puritan authors see, CL, VII, 2 ff., which is also in Works, XIV, 228-30. The first edition of Wesley's CL contained several Calvinistic tendencies which were not consistent with Wesley's Arminianism, which were deleted in the second edition after his death. See, Monk, John Wesley: His Puritan Heritage (1966), p. 35.

[26] DOS, p. 132, in Works, IX, 261. Taylor attacked the Westminster Catechism and not the Anglican article of religion. Wesley's favourite weapon in this defense was David Jennings, A Vindication of the Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin (1740), which he extracted at great length.

[27] Sunday Service (1984), p. 309.

[28] JWL, IV, 146 (1761), 'I think it great pity that the few clergymen in England who preach the three grand scriptural doctrines- Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and Holiness consequent thereon- should have any jealousies or misunderstandings between them'.

[29] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 182.

[30] Works, IX, 194. See Charles W. Brockwell, Jr., 'John Wesley's Doctrine of Justification', WTS, 18(1983)2, 18-19.

systematic form, and saw systematic implications as one doctrine related to another.

1.3. Importance of the Doctrine of the Soul to Original Sin

Another doctrine which had systematic implications on original sin was the doctrine of the soul. He even went as far to say that many 'points of divinity' depend on the doctrine of the soul.[31] This was not just an unexpurgated hyperbole which found its way into the Arminian Magazine. For Wesley it was the truth. The soul was a doctrinal junction, where many 'points of divinity' converge.

For example, we have already seen how Wesley's concept of personhood consisted of a body/soul duality (a duality denied by Lockian anthropology), and the importance of the soul to his empiricism. In that context he gave the soul the following traits: (1) it comes into the world as a 'blank slate'; (2) the soul perceives by the senses but it cannot be perceived by the senses, only by faith;[32] (3) it is immaterial;[33] (4) it is eternal, but not pre-existent.[34]

What this chapter will try to do is to look at the relationship between the soul and original sin, in order to try and understand the metaphysical cause of sin, which was for Wesley empirically observable. To better understand this relationship the discussion will be divided into two sections- speculative anthropology, and empirical anthropology. The relationship between speculative and empirical anthropology started with Adam being created in the image of God, for which the soul

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[31] See, 'The True Original of the Soul', AM 6(1783), 41-3, 96-8,149-51, 208-10, 265-7, 321-3, 375-7, 431-5, 492-4, 544-7, 603-6, 664-7. His interest in the doctrine of soul went all the way back to his Oxford days, when he read a lecture on 'The Souls of Animals' ('De Anima Brutorum') in disputation for his degree in 1726, see BEW, XXV, 208 note 1 (1726/7).

[32] 'On the Omnipresence of God' (1788), BEW, IV, 45.

[33] NP (1777), 1.4.10; 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 30-1.

[34] 'On Eternity' (1786), BEW, II, 361.

served as its receptacle.[35] This concept, derived from Genesis 1.27, is basic to understanding Wesley's anthropology, hamartiology, and soteriology, making the image of God the first key to understanding Wesley's 'order of salvation'.[36] It is not surprising that Wesley attacked Taylor for separating the image of God from the doctrine of the soul.[37] To Wesley such a move ultimately served to undo salvation. Because of its importance this is where Wesley's doctrine of original sin must start- the image of God in the soul of man, or with Wesley's speculative anthropology.

2. The Image of God in the Soul of Adam: Wesley's Speculative Anthropology

Wesley's doctrine of original sin included trying to postulate the state of Adam's soul, or his original nature, before the fall.[38] As he speculated about that, he was not above even speculating about the location of Eden before the fall.[39] Wesley had ultimately to confess that we cannot know the true difference between the state of humanity now, and Adam's state in Paradise, wherever it may have been, before the fall.[40] Whatever is said about Adam's nature as he lived in Paradise is ultimately speculative anthropology. Still, he was unimpeded and undeterred by this and speculated a great deal about Adam's Divine image and nature before the fall.[41]

Wesley explored speculative anthropology through the concept of the image of God in the soul of man. As a result, his speculative anthropology has as much to do

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[35] 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 30; 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 303; NP (1777), I, 180.

[36] Outler, BEW, IV, 290.

[37] DOS, Works, IX, 240; cf. Taylor, SDOS (1746), p. 7.

[38] See his extraction, and defense, of Watts, The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind, in DOS, Works, IX, 347, 'by a careful survey of what man is now, compared with what he should be, we may easily determine, whether man is at present such a creature as the great and blessed God made him at first.'

[39] "An Enquiry into the situation of the Terrestial Paradise", AM, 13(1790), 657.

[40] NP (1777), I, 179.

[41] A fact missed by Wynkoop, A Theology of Love (1972), p. 106.

with the doctrine of God as the doctrine of man and woman, which has been linked together by eternal reason. Implicit throughout the entire doctrine was something of an assumption about the nature of the God in which Adam was supposedly the image. To be created human meant to share with God in some way something of the Divine attributes, which in itself rooted Wesley's personhood in his concept of eternal reason. The problem would be in determining which of those attributes humanity is able to share with God by way of the concept of 'image'.

Wesley's struggle to determine these attributes started early in his career, as early as 1730, in the first paragraph on the first page of the first sermon in Sermons on Several Occasions.[42] Even before then, in 1725 Wesley had a postal discussion with his mother on the matter.[43] One important presupposition to the image of God was the influence of Wesley's aesthetic theme in his doctrine of creation. Like the remainder of creation, Adam was without fault and perfect in every way.

> In the image of God was man made, but a little lower than the angels. His nature was perfect, angelical, divine. He was an incorruptible picture of the God of glory. He bore his stamp on every part of his soul; the brightness of his Creator shone mightily upon him.[44]

The just barely 'sub-angelic' man was the best he could possibly be, living in a world which was the best it could possibly be. The pristine quality of both creation and the divine image was obvious to Wesley.

Perhaps the best way to discuss the issue is by tracing the historical development of Wesley's thought throughout his career. We will discover four periods of development. The first period started in 1730 with his sermon, 'The Image of God'. The second period is related to the emergence of a trinitarian hermeneutic.

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[42] 'The Image of God' (1730); 'Salvation by Faith' in, SOSO (1746). For a list of many of the references see BEW, I, 117, note 5.

[43] BEW, XXV, 164-65 (1725); cf. AM 1(1778), 33-6.

[44] 'The One Thing Needful' (1734), BEW, IV, 354.

The third period consisted of his application of this hermeneutic to the image of God. The last period involved understanding the image of the Triune God as consisting of moral, natural, and political attributes.

2.1. Understanding, Will, Liberty

The first period of development is dated from 1730 when Wesley preached his first university sermon in St. Mary's, entitled, 'The Image of God'.[45] In the sermon he developed the notion of Adamic perfection under three headings- understanding, will, and liberty, headings also used to describe angelic perfection.[46] 'First with regard to his understanding', Adam was able to distinguish truth from falsehood, and infer truths by making comparisons.[47] His understanding was just, and infallible. He perceived things with perfect clarity and without deception, making him 'a stranger to error and doubt'.[48] His mind was as quick as it was agile. His comprehension and knowledge was vast. His will was equally perfect, and he willed one thing above anything else- to love.

> Love filled the whole expansion of his soul; it possessed him without a rival. Every movement of his heart was love: it knew no other fervour. Love was his vital heat; it was the genial warmth that animated his whole frame.[49]

The purity of his will made evident the liberty he also enjoyed, a perfect freedom, an unerring understanding, and a will without corruption. All of these 'gave the last stroke to the image of God in man, by crowning all these with happiness'.[50]

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[45] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 290-303. The extant text is an 18 page manuscript (with 1 blank page between pages 10 and 11 for some reason) in Wesley's abbreviated longhand and cipher, probably the copy he used in the pulpit. For Outler's helpful introduction to this sermon see, BEW, IV, 290-91.

[46] 'Of Good Angels' (1783), BEW, III, 6.

[47] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 293.

[48] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 294.

[49] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, 4:294-95. This aspect anticipates what will later become the 'moral' image of God.

[50] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 295.

The nature of the image was extremely rational. It has already been shown in the previous chapter that Wesley eventually came to regard these categories as not being exclusive to humanity. As shall be seen below, the concept of understanding, liberty, and will remained unaltered throughout his career, although it would eventually be subsumed under the category of 'natural image'. The love Wesley spoke of as being a part of the image of understanding, liberty, and will, shall later be discussed by Wesley under the heading of 'moral image', as his categories broaden, his language becomes more precise, and he moves from a rational understanding of the image of God to a more relational one.

2.2. A Trinitarian Hermeneutic

The second development in Wesley's concept of the image of God consisted of a hermeneutical principle he seemed to use throughout his career, which was most prominently displayed in, Explanatory Notes on the Old Testament (1765). This principle was responsible for Wesley's exegesis of the Genesis passages relating to the image of God. As early as 1748 Wesley showed that from Genesis 1.1 forward he used a trinitarian hermeneutic which resulted in an assumption about the nature of God as revealed even in the Old Testament.[51] The picture given of the God of glory was a trinitarian one, so that the image and nature of God was just more than the product of a trinitarian consultation, it was an image of the Trinity.

> *Let us make man-* The three persons of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, consult about it, and concur in it; because man, when he was made, was to be dedicated and devoted to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[52]

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[51] 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, VI' (1748), BEW, I, 581; 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 474, 'To take the matter from the beginning: 'The Lord God' (literally 'Jehovah, the Gods'; that is, One and Three) 'created man in his own image'. Charles makes much use of this trinitarian interpretation of divine plurality in his hymns. See, 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), No. 88-92, 95, etc. Cf. Augustine, 'Confessions', 13.5.6.

[52] ENOT (1765), Gen 1.26. Cf. Augustine, City of God, XI.26.

Humanity was made in the image of the Trinity and was to be devoted to the Trinity.

This trinitarian hermeneutic was by no means unique to Wesley. It was mediated to him in the very least through his knowledge and use of Matthew Henry's commentary on the Old Testament, which (along with Matthew Poole's, Annotations) became the basis of his Explanatory Notes on the Old Testament. A clear use of this hermeneutic can be seen throughout the ENOT, but especially in the Psalms and Isaiah.[53]

If speculative anthropology has as its starting point the doctrine of God, it must be recognized that the centre of Wesley's doctrine of God was a doctrine of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Wesley's Patrology, Christology, and Pneumatology cannot be removed from this trinitarian context. Each is robbed of its richness when separated from the other.

2.3. A Trinitarian Image of God

While the hermeneutic was not unusual, how he applied this hermeneutic, and to what extent, was. This introduces the third development in Wesley's concept of the image of God. It can be seen especially if one turns to the trinitarian hymns of Charles as they were edited and published by John, where the trinitarian hermeneutic can be seen at work trying to understand the nature of the image of God. The personal and theological influence of Charles upon John has been terribly underestimated. Here is one frequently overlooked instance in which Charles' thought perhaps served as a catalyst to John's. There were 4 collections of trinitarian hymns, consisting of 223 hymns in all- 11 under the heading of 'Gloria Patri' in the second series of 'Hymns on God's Everlasting Love' (1742); 24 in a collection called 'Gloria Patri, or Hymns to the Trinity' (1746), a collection intended for use on

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[53] For other examples of this trinitarian hermeneutic see ENOT, Psalm 16.1; 41.9; 68.18; 59.21; Solomon's Song, 2.10, 12, passim; Isaiah 6.3, 8; etc.

Trinity Sunday; 136 in 'Hymns on the Trinity', 12 of which found their way into the Collection (1780) as numbers 244-55; and 52 in 'Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity', which were published together as one volume in 1767.[54]

In, 'Hymns on God's Everlasting Love' (1742) a phrase appeared which summarizes well the understanding of the image of God as developed in all the trinitarian hymns:

> You, whom he ordained to be
> Transcripts of the Trinity[55]
>
> Transcript of holiness Divine,
> The Triune God proclaim,
> And spirit, and soul, and flesh resign
> To glorify His name.[56]

The 'Transcripts of the Trinity' theme was even more developed in 'Hymns and Prayers on the Trinity' (1767) as may be seen in this sample of lines:

> Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
> Whom on all-perfect God we own,
> Restorer of thine image lost,
> Thy various offices make known;
> Display our fallen souls to raise,
> Thy whole economy of grace.[57]
>
> An image of a Triune God[...][58]
>
> The Triune God of holiness[...][59]

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[54] Perhaps it is significant to note that the trinitarian hymns appear in the Collection under the heading 'For Believers Rejoicing', an experiential category, and not under a theological one, such as 'On the Trinity'. Of course the trinitarian hymns were not confined to these collections. Trinitarian hymns appeared throughout the hymns, e.g. 'Hymns for a Family' (1767) No. 166, 'Gloria Patri, &c.'. For a good summary of the trinitarian hymns in general see, Rattenbury, The Evangelical Doctrines (1941), pp. 137-51. Also, Quantrille, 'The Triune God in the Hymns of Charles Wesley' (1988).

[55] 'Hymns on God's Everlasting Love' (1742), BEW, VII, no. 7; cf. John's 'transcript of the divine purity' in 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765), BEW, I, 452.

[56] 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), No. 97.

[57] 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), No. 14 of 'Hymns and Prayers'; also BEW, VII, 394.

[58] 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), No. 98 (cf. No. 87); also BEW, VII, 390.

[59] 'Hymns to the Trinity' (1767), No. 14; also BEW, VII, 395.

> And all the glorious persons joined to form thy fav'rite, man.[60]

If looked at chronologically, Charles introduced the 'Transcripts of the Trinity' theme as early as 1742. However, it was not fully developed until the publication of 'Hymns on the Trinity' in 1767. In, 'Hymns on the Trinity' one sees that man and woman were created in the image of God as transcripts, written records of the Trinity. This understanding of 'transcripts of the Trinity', based on a trinitarian hermeneutic, offers enough evidence to suggest that certainly by 1770, implicit to Wesleyan anthropology and soteriology was a trinitarian image of God. In 1780, many of the hymns used to develop the 'Transcripts of the Trinity' theme became a part of one of the important texts of Methodist doctrine- A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists. With the publication of these same hymns in the Collection, the trinitarian image of the trinitarian God can be seen impressing itself onto the soul of man and woman, into the anthropology of Methodism, and into a volume of Wesley's works.

At first it seems rather natural to think that if God is Trinity, the image of God in man and woman must be somehow trinitarian in nature. However, this was something of a doctrinal innovation. Historically, there is no precedent for a trinitarian image in the early church fathers. Perhaps, as Origen seemed to think, it gave away too much to the Greek notion of the tripartite soul.[61] While Tertullian employed a trinitarian hermeneutic in reading Genesis 1.26, in which the Trinity was seen to say, 'Let us make man in our image[...]', he fell short of saying it was a trinitarian image. Instead, he said it was in 'Christ's image'.[62] The Christological image of God was also a

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[60] 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), No. 87; also BEW, VII, 389. See also, 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), Nos. 39, 50, 97, 126; 'Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity', Nos. 10, 18, 28, etc.

[61] Origen, 'De Principiis', 3.4.1.

[62] Tertullian, 'Against Praxeas', §12.

view held by Irenaeus,[63] Anthanasius,[64] St. Hilary of Poitiers,[65] and St. Ambrose.[66] The predominate understanding of the image of God among the Fathers was a Christological one. John Cassian considered it heretical to give anything but a spiritual meaning to the image of God, which denied aspects of the Incarnation as a pattern for the image of God.[67] However, Justin did give a 'fleshly' understanding to it, partially in order to argue for the resurrection of the body.[68] John of Damascus gave the image of God a visible and invisible nature consisting of a body formed from earth, and a reasoning and thinking soul, which itself consists of mind and free-will.[69] However, nowhere in any of these was any indication given that the image of God might be trinitarian one.

It was Augustine who suggested a trinitarian image of God.[70] He located it in the rational soul,[71] and consisted of memory, intellect, and will,[72] although he did admit there was a trace of an image of the Trinity in the outer person (i.e. the bodily senses),[73] but not

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[63] Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', 5.16.1-3.

[64] Athanasius, 'The Incarnation of the Word', §11-14; 'Defense of the Nicene Definition', 4.17; 5.20.

[65] St. Hilary of Poitiers, 'On the Trinity', 3.23; 5.7-10. Cf. Aquinas' remarks on Hilary in, ST, 1a. 93, 5.

[66] St. Ambrose, 'Exposition of the Christian Faith', 1.7.53.

[67] John Cassian, 'The Second Conference of Abbot Isaac', §§3-5.

[68] Justin, 'On the Resurrection', §7.

[69] John of Damascus, 'Exposition of the Orthodox Faith', XII.

[70] Augustine, The City of God (413-27), XI.26, 28; On the Trinity (399-419), VII.6.12; cf. XII.5-7; cf. Origen, 'Commentary on Matthew', 14.16; Tertullian, 'Against Marcion', 5.8.

[71] Augustine, On the Trinity, XIV.4.6. The renewed image included the 'renewal of the mind', see 'Of the Work of Monks', § 41.

[72] See Calvin, Institutes, 1.15.4; Augustine, On the Trinity (399-419), VII.6.12; XV.23-25; City of God (413-27), XI.26-28, XII.23.23; cf. Aristotle, Ethica Eudemia, 1218^{b}, 1235, 1236. Although Augustine did see the symbols of the Trinity in man as 'to be, to know, and to will', Confessions (397-401), XIII.9.12, there was a trichotomy in humanity which consisted of 'body, soul, and mind', VII .17.23.

[73] Augustine, On the Trinity (399-419), XI.1.1. Cf. Clementina, 'Clementine Homilies', 11.4, '[...]the body of man bears the image of God.'

in the body itself.[74] Aquinas agreed with Augustine, saying if the image were just Christological God would have said, 'let us make man in thy image', instead of 'our image', but it was an image based on God's essence, or the one-in-three.[75]

Another Protestant theologian to take up any notion of a trinitarian image of God (one that even involved some notion of the flesh) was Andreas Osiander.[76] In refuting Osiander, Calvin acknowledged that the image of God existed in the soul as an image of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, but explicitly, and rather tersely rejected that it was in the image of the Trinity.[77] Luther, in his commentary on Genesis, on the other hand, was more diplomatic in his denial of it.[78] Arminius held to body and soul paradigm for the image of God, but made no explicit reference to spirit being a part, and it was certainly not trinitarian.[79] The notion of a trinitarian image was also found in the theologies of Bernard, Bonaventure, John of the Cross, and even William Law.[80] But in none of these was it developed in the same way as it was by Wesley.

For Wesley, however, the nature of the Triune God impressed the image of the Triune God into the soul of man and woman. It could be argued that the basis of the relationship between the human and the Divine was the Trinity, which grounds the Trinity as a part of Wesley's understanding of eternal reason. Trinity is the nature of God. The trinitarian image of God in humanity is the nature of humanity. If that is the case, the problem is finding an appropriate trilogy to fill the categories

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[74] Augustine, 'On the Soul and Its Origin' (419-21), IV.20, '[...]God is not a body. How, then, could a body receive His image?'

[75] Aquinas, ST, 1a. 93, 5.

[76] See Seeburg, The History of Doctrines (1977), II, 369-72. Also, Andreas Osiander, Disput. de justificatione (1550); Von dem einigen Mitler Jhesu Christo und Rechtfertigugng des Glaubens (1551).

[77] Calvin, Institutes, I.xv.4-6; but, cf. Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis, Genesis 1.26.

[78] Luther, Luther's Works (1958), I, 60-67.

[79] Arminius, Works (1825), II, 362-4.

[80] Hobhouse, Writings of William Law (1949), pp. 324-25.

created by a trinitarian hermeneutic. This tends to lead one into somewhat arbitrary divisions of personality and personhood that looks for a trilogy in order to satisfy a hermeneutical presupposition, which is what Wesley seemed to do. On this basis he had a propensity to discuss the image of God with concepts grouped into threes.

On a more positive side, what the trinitarian image of God also indicates is the profundity of trinitarian theology in Wesley's understanding of the Christian system. This will become more obvious as we discuss the order of salvation. The Triune image anticipated trinitarian salvation. If one then looks at the Trinity as three persons as the Godhead relation to each other, there is another link between the relational aspect of the Trinity and what we will see to be the relational aspect of the image of God. The relational aspect of the Trinity is reflected in the relational nature of the image of God in man.

One way Wesley's trinitarian division could be explained is through 1 Thessalonians 5.23 which lists flesh, spirit, and soul.[81] This trilogy is often seen in the hymns, where it was suggest together they comprised the image of God, as the parallelism in this couplet reveals:

> Stamped with the Triune character;
> Flesh, spirit, soul, to thee resign[...][82]

By spirit, Wesley came to mean 'the highest principle in man, the immortal spirit made in the image of God, endued (as all spirits are, so far as we can conceive) with self-motion, understanding, will, and liberty'. By body he meant, 'that portion of organized matter which every man receives in the womb, with which he is born into the world[...]. At present it is connected with flesh and blood. But these are not the body. They are

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[81] See, ENNT, 1 Thess. 5.23.

[82] 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), No. 14 of 'Hymns and Prayers'; also BEW, VII, 395. See also, 'Hymns on the Trinity' (1767), 97, 126; 'Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity' (1746), 10; BEW, VII, 218, 287, 395, 534, 594, 597, 701, 710.

only the temporary clothing of the body, which it wholly puts off in the grave.' By soul he meant, what 'seems to be the immediate clothing of the spirit, the vehicle with which it is connected from its first existence, and which is never separated from it, either in life or in death. Probably it consists of ethereal or electric fire, the purest of all matter.'[83] In spite of this last sentence, a sentence he would have been much better off without, Wesley did not believe the soul was a material substance- a view he soundly rejected in two sermons after this remark was made- 'On the Omnipresence of God' (1788), and 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788). The most helpful comment this statement can offer is that the soul is the 'immediate clothing of the spirit', the means by which spirit is connected to body. Apart from this there seems to have been little difference between soul and spirit for Wesley.

There are several reasons why one could be tempted to interpret the trinitarian image in this way. If this trinitarian image is understood as one of flesh, spirit, and soul[84] it would implicate the Incarnation as the pattern for this trinitarian image of the trinitarian God, as Christ is the very image of God.[85] Secondly, because it takes into consideration the totality of the body/soul duality, it would locate the image of God within the whole concept of personhood, and not just in its spiritual component. But thirdly, this view would correspond to the great commandment of loving God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength, which is how Wesley described his understanding of Christian perfection, which in turn was the renewal of the image of God, which in turn corresponds to Wesley's understanding of the sanctification of 'the spirit, the soul, and the

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[83] 'Some Thoughts on an Expression of St. Paul, in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, chap. v. ver. 23.' AM, 9(1786), in Works, XI, 447-48. Cf. Aquinas, ST, 1a. 90, 1-3.

[84] cf. harmony of body, soul, spirit in Origen, 'Commentary on Matthew', XIV.3; Origin De Principiis, III.vi.1-9 where it seems to imply that the image of God involves body, soul, spirit.

[85] 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, XIII' (1750), BEW, I, 697 and n.

body'.[86] Such a view would provide greater continuity of the body/soul duality from image of God to love of God as the renewal of the image of God. But Wesley did not develop the trinitarian image of body, soul, and spirit in his sermons, and the references to the flesh, spirit, and soul being the trinitarian image of God are scant. He even said in one context that since God was spirit, so also was man, who was made in the image of God.[87] In general, Wesley did not seek in the image of God a corporeal substance.[88] Although Wesley would use these categories as a way to talk about the entire person being entirely sanctified, they were not, in Wesley's mind, a satisfactory solution to the categories created by his trinitarian hermeneutic. Neither can they easily accommodate the relational aspects of the image of God. At best they were a trio, but not trinitarian.

2.4. The Political, Natural, and Moral Image of God

Instead, he more fully pursued and developed an image of the Triune God which was political (governing), natural (rational), and moral (relational) in nature, a trilogy already noticed and taken for granted by many Wesleyan scholars.[89] This is the final aspect of the development of Wesley's understanding in the image of God, and will mark a shift from the image of God being

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[86] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, II, 75; based on an exegesis of 1 Thess. 5.23, see ENNT.

[87] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 438; 'On Divine Providence' (1786), BEW, II, 540; 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 63.

[88] One reason for the reluctance to speak of image of God in corporeal terms could very well have been the reluctance to attach to God attributes of feminine gender, as was the case of Gregory of Nyssa, 'On the Making of Man', XVI.8-9.

[89] e.g., Wynkoop, A Theology of Love (1972), pp. 109-10; Carter, in, A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology, Carter, ed. (1983), I, 204; Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1989), p.23; Cho, 'Adam's Fall and God's Grace: John Wesley's Theological Anthropology', Evangelical Review of Theology 10(1986)3:20; Deschner, Wesley's Christology (1985), pp. 69-70. But see, Cox, John Wesley's Concept of Perfection (1964), p. 28; and Dunning, Grace, Faith, and Holiness (1988), pp. 150-57, who make no mention of Wesley's understanding of the political image.

primarily rational to it being more relational. This suggests that Wesley's move to these categories and their divisions was perhaps not as arbitrary as one might imagine. They are much better suited for the profoundly relational aspect of his doctrine of Christian perfection. Wesley's body/soul duality depicts individuality, but the trinitarian image of God depicted relationality. For Wesley persons are individuals involved in divine and human relations. Individuality and relationality are not opposites, but apposites, existing simultaneously as light exists as both waves and particles.

Chronologically, however, Wesley never used these headings until after publishing an extract of Isaac Watts's, Ruin and Recovery of Mankind (1740), in The Doctrine of Original Sin (1757).[90] In Watts, one finds the ideas of the political, natural, and moral nature of the image of God, although Watts himself makes no mention of it being an image of the Trinity. By this time Wesley had developed: (1) an understanding of the image of God as an image of understanding, liberty, and will; (2) a trinitarian hermeneutic; and, (3) an understanding that individuals were 'Transcripts of the Trinity'. This concept of the moral, natural, and political image being the Triune image completed a significant doctrinal shift.

Three years after publishing the extraction of Watts, these categories appeared with a trinitarian connection in Wesley's sermon, 'The New Birth' (1760).

> 'And God', the three-one God, 'said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.' Not barely in his *natural image*, a picture of his own immortality, a spiritual being endued with understand-

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[90] This extraction is found in Works, IX, 353-97, especially p. 355 where they are mentioned. Also see, 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 188 and note 5. Wesley implied he had not read Watts's work until he finished Part III, DOS, Works, IX, 353. He had, however, extracted Watts in 1740, and published it as Serious Considerations concerning the Doctrines of Election and Reprobation (1740), which is chapter 13 of Ruin and Recovery of Mankind. My thanks to Herbert McGonigle who pointed this out to me.

> ing, freedom of will, and various affections; nor merely in his *political image*, the governor of this lower world, having 'dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth'; but chiefly in his *moral image*, which according to the Apostle, is 'righteousness and true holiness'. In this image of God was man made.[91]

At that point Wesley's understanding of the image of God was that the triune God created Adam in an image which was a natural, political, and moral image, or essentially relational in nature.

2.5. The Political Image of God

Comparatively speaking, Wesley did not say much about the political image of God. It was explained only slightly in his extraction of Isaac Watts', Ruin and Recovery of Mankind.[92] Between it, the relevant sermons, and the Natural Philosophy, one can put together a composite view of the political image, from which we may derive the following traits. First, it consisted of a governing trait, as Adam was made 'the governor of this lower world', which essentially spoke of the Adamic relationship with the remainder of creation beneath him in the chain of being.[93] As governor of the lower world, he was given 'dominion over the brutes'.[94] In Wesley's extraction of a work by Samuel Hebden, also found in the Doctrine of Original Sin, there is the concept of the 'political image' as man's vested dominion over creation without using the phrase 'political image' to describe it.[95] This dominion was seen as one of the blessings 'which God gave at first to Adam'[96] because it resulted in peace and harmony with the brute

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[91] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 188. The emphasis was his. Cf. 'Free Thoughts on Brute Creation' (an extract of John Hildrop, Free thoughts upon Brute Creation: or, an Examination of Father Bougeant's Philosophical Amusements, 1742-43), AM, 6(1783), 35.

[92] DOS, Works, IX, 355, 381.

[93] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 188.

[94] Works, IX, 381; also ENOT, Gen. 1.26. Cf. Chrysostom, 'Concerning the Statues', Homily 7.3.

[95] DOS, Works, IX, 400-01.

[96] DOS, Works, IX, 381.

creation.[97] Other implications of the political image got short treatment in Wesley's, Natural Philosophy (1777), which was, after all, a survey of the domain of humanity (albeit fallen humanity), but it does not add much more than what has been already said.[98]

What is curious is that although Wesley never thought of himself as a politician (saying, 'I am no politician: Politics lie quite out of my province'),[99] and thought it best that Christian ministers should steer clear of political controversy[100] (which he did not always do himself), he did go through a period of interest in political issues. But nowhere is this developed into any comprehensive political theory of civil government, yet Wesley's assumptions on such matters may be seen in much of what he said.[101] Some of

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[97] DOS, Works, IX, 381; cf. 'The Apocalypse of Sedrach', § VI.

[98] NP (1777), II.ii.3.

[99] 'Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs. In a Letter to a Friend.' (1770), p. 1; in Works, XI, 14.

[100] 'How far is it the duty of a Christian minister to preach politics?', in AM 5(1782), 151, and Works, XI, 154-55.

[101] Wesley wrote several political tracts, e.g. 'Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs' (1770); 'Thoughts upon Liberty' (1772); 'Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power' (1772, Wesley's response to the spread of democracy); 'Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions' (1773, a plan to solve unemployment, reduce the national debt, and lower taxes); 'Thoughts upon Slavery' (1774); 'A Calm Address to our American Colonies' (1775). In this tract he extracted Samuel Johnson's 'Taxation No Tyranny', resulting in several counter-publications, e.g. Caleb Evans', 'A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his 'Calm Address'' (1775); 'Political Empiricism: a Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley' (1776), by an unknown author; and, August Toplady's 'The Old Fox Tarr'd and Feather'd' (1776). Still Wesley continued to write on political matters with tracts such as, 'Some Observations on Liberty' (1776, Wesley's response to Richard Price's, 'Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America', see JWJ, VI, 100); 'A Seasonable Address to the More Serious Part of the Inhabitants of Great Britain, Respecting the Unhappy Contest Between us an our American Brethren: With an Occasional Word Interspersed to those of a Different Complexion' (1776); 'A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England' (1777); 'Thoughts upon God's Sovereignty' (1777); 'A Serious Address to the People of England, with Regard to the State of the Nation' (1778); 'A Compassionate Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland' (1778); 'An Account of the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies. Extracted from a Late Author' (1780); 'Reflection on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion' (1780); 'The

(continued...)

these assumptions will be discussed below under the heading of 'liberty'.

2.6. The Natural Image of God

He did say considerably more about the natural image of God. He took it to be endued with understanding, will, and liberty,[102] primarily rational concepts already mentioned above and developed in his early sermon, 'The Image of God' (1730). This is as close as Wesley came to Augustine's trinitarian understanding of memory, intellect, and will. Understanding, will, and liberty functioned as Wesley's understanding of the image of God until his reading of Watts, when he modified and enlarged it to be the political, natural, and moral image of God, and subsumed the understanding, will, and liberty under the heading of natural image.

Wesley's basic concept of Adam's original righteousness as understanding, will, and liberty remained intact throughout his career, as a comparison of 'The Image of God' (1730) with his sermons, 'The General Deliverance' (1781), and, 'On the Fall of Man' (1782) reveals.[103] However, there were some further developments.

First, in 'The General Deliverance' he added 'self-motion', which was just a way of separating animate from inanimate objects, such as 'machines, stocks and stones'.[104] This was explained in a bit more detail in, Natural Philosophy, and illustrates a Newtonian influence.[105] It should come as no surprise to discover that

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[101](...continued)
Protestant Association' (1781, a stinging satirical poem by Charles regarding the Gordon Riots); 'French Liberty: or, an Account of the Prison of Bicetre in France' AM, 4(1786).

[102] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 474-75; 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 409.

[103] Cf. 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 438-39, and 'On the Fall of Man' (1782) BEW, II, 409-10. Cf. his extract of Thomas Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State[...] (1720) in 'Part VII.' of DOS, Works, IX, 434-64.

[104] 'Heavenly Treasure in Earth Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 163.

[105] NP (1777), I, 151 ff.

'self-moving' was a part of the remains of the image of God after the fall.[106]

Secondly, perhaps because of the concurrent development of the free-will aspects of Arminianism, the heading of liberty was a bit more emphatic in, 'The General Deliverance' (1781). There he stated that without liberty, which was freedom of choice, Adam would not have been any different from 'a piece of marble'.[107] The concept of liberty was given a prominent role in the image of God, giving it an important part in Wesley's understanding of what it means to be human. 'Man was made with an entire indifference, either to keep or change his first estate: it was left to himself what he would do; his own choice was to determine him in all things'.[108] All of which left Wesley to exclaim in his sermon 'On the Fall of Man' (1782),

> 'So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him!' Mark the emphatical repetition! God did not make him mere matter, a piece of senseless, unintelligent clay, but a spirit like himself[...]As such he was endued with understanding, with a will, including various affections, and with liberty, a power of using them in a right or wrong manner, of choosing good or evil. Otherwise neither his understanding nor his will would have been to any purpose; for he must have been as incapable of virtue or holiness as the stock of a tree. Adam, in whom all mankind were then contained, freely preferred evil to good.[109]

Although Adam was made in the image of God, '[...]yet he was not made immutable[...]. He was therefore created able to stand, and yet liable to fall'.[110] The natural image (as understanding, will, and liberty) is what enabled him to do one or the other- to keep the moral law, or to break it. This understanding of liberty was largely based upon a scholastic understanding of liberty. In his sermon, 'What is Man?' (1788) he would speak of a 'liberty of contrariety', or 'a power to do

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[106] 'Heavenly Treasure in Earth Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 163.
[107] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 439.
[108] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 295.
[109] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 409-10.
[110] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 189.

or not to do', and 'a liberty of contradiction', or 'the power to act one way or the contrary'.[111] We have already seen the importance the concept of liberty has played in Wesley's theodicy, and its implications on doctrine of God.

But the concept of liberty had more than just abstract or speculative consequences. While not formally a part of the political image of God, the concept of liberty did have profound political consequences for Wesley. If liberty is a part of the image of God, then liberty must be considered a basic and fundamental human right. It was on this basis that he stood firmly against slavery, saying,

> Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air. And no human law can deprive him of that right, which he derives from the law of nature.
>
> If therefore you have any regard to Justice, (to say nothing of Mercy, nor of the revealed Law of GOD) render unto all their due, Give Liberty to whom Liberty is due, that is to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle towards all men. And see that you invariably do unto every one, as you would he should to unto *You*.[112]

Such a view was not derived from political theories of human rights, but more likely from Anthony Benezet, a French born Quaker.[113] Obviously for Wesley the image of God had moral implications, especially where slavery was concerned. He was unequivocally against slavery, and on this issue he did become politically involved, so

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[111] 'What is Man?' (1788), BEW, IV, 24. See Outler's note 19 in which he attributes this to a scholastic distinction differentiating between the liberty of angels and that of men. However, he makes no connection between Wesley and his extraction of Thomas Goad, A Discourse Concerning the Necessity and Contingency of Events in the World, in respect of God's Eternal Decrees in the AM, where this distinction also appeared. It should also be noted that this is slightly different from the type of liberty Locke discussed in the section extracted by Wesley in AM, 5(1782), 476-8.

[112] 'Thoughts upon Slavery' (1774), p. 51. For an excellent treatment of this subject see, Smith, John Wesley and Slavery (1986), but note that he refers to Wesley's third edition, which has a different pagination than the first.

[113] Smith, John Wesley and Slavery (1986), p. 78.

much so that his last letter was to William Wilberforce, the Parliamentary campaigner for the abolition of slavery.[114]

But he was also equally against the American cries for liberty.[115] He never sought to cover his Toryism, which he defined as 'one that believes God, not the people, to be the origin of all civil power'.[116] In defense of this position, Wesley wrote, 'Some Observations on Liberty: Occasioned by a late Tract' (1776). The 'late Tract' was Richard Price's, 'Observations on the nature of Civil Liberty, the principles of Government, and the justice and policy of the war with America' (1776). There, Price had argued for an understanding of moral and physical liberty, which Wesley denied, arguing for religious and civil liberty instead, of which Wesley thought the Americans had plenty.[117] In 'Thoughts upon Liberty' Wesley argued that religious liberty is a right to

> every living man[...] as he is a rational creature. The Creator gave him this right when he endowed him with understanding[...] this is an indefeasible right; it is inseparable from humanity. And God did never give authority to any man, or number of men, to deprive any child of man thereof, under any

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[114] See, JWL, VIII, 264-65.

[115] See, Charles Wesley, 'The American War', in Unpublished Poetry (1988), I, 41-57; Jarboe, Bibliography (1987), entries 75, 1996-2000 for a series of publications on this poem. For John on the Revolutionary War see, Alderfer, 'British Evangelical Response to the American Revolution', Asbury Seminarian, 18(1964)2, 22-48; Copplestone, 'John Wesley and the American Revolution', Religion in Life, 45(1976), 89-105; Holland, 'John Wesley and the American Revolution' Journal of Church and State, 5(1963), 199-213; Hutchinson, 'New Wine in Old Wineskins: A Fresh Look at Wesley and the American Revolution', Christian Advocate 9(1965)12, 12-13; Morgan, '"The Dupes of Designing Men": John Wesley and the American Revolution', Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 44(1975), 121-31; Allan, '"I Fear God and Honour the King": John Wesley and the American Revolution', Church History, 45(1976), 316-28; Stokes, 'The Baptist and Methodist Clergy in South Carolina and the American Revolution', South Carolina Historical Magazine, 73(1972), 87-96; Harvey, 'The Wesleyan Movement and the American Revolution' (1962).

[116] JWL, VII, 305-6 (1785).

[117] 'Some Observations on Liberty: Occasioned by a late Tract' (1776), in Works, XI, 90-118; cf. 'Thoughts upon Liberty' (1772), §16.

> colour or pretence whatever. What an amazing thing is it, then, that the governing part of almost every nation under heaven should have taken upon them, in all ages, to rob all under their power of this liberty![116]

To Wesley, civil liberty consisted of a 'liberty to enjoy our lives and fortunes in our own way; to use our property, whatever is legally our own, according to our own choice.'[117] Wesley rightfully said what they really wanted was not liberty, but independence.[120] To Wesley,

> The spirit of *independency*, which our poet so justly terms
> The glorious fault of angels and God;[121]
> (that is, in plain terms, of devils) the same which so many call *liberty*[...][122]

What Wesley really objected to was what he saw as the 'indefensible' republican notion that power had its origin in the people. To him, 'There is no power but of God.'[123] He was convinced that instead of independence the Americans should long for *real* liberty,

> liberty from sin, true civil liberty; a liberty from oppression of every kind; from illegal violence; a liberty to enjoy their lives, their persons and their property- in a word, a liberty to be governed in all things by laws of their country. They will again enjoy true British liberty[...][124]

Much more could be said about Wesley's concept of liberty, indeed much needs to be said, as it is an area which still remains relatively unexplored. But the temptation to head in such a direction here must be

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[116] 'Thoughts Upon Liberty' (1772), Works, XI, 37-38.

[117] 'Thoughts Upon Liberty' (1772), Works, XI, 41.

[120] 'Some Observations on Liberty: Occasioned by a late Tract' (1776), p. 5.

[121] A quote from Pope, 'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady', l. 13. See Outler's footnote, BEW, III, 606. The Latin translation would be 'felix culpa'.

[122] 'The Late Word of God in North America' (1778), BEW, III, 606-7.

[123] 'Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power' (1772), in Works, XI, 52-3. Later on, when he wrote, 'Some Observations on Liberty' he quoted himself verbatim from the passage above, with one difference- 'The supposition, then, that the people are the origin of power, or that 'all government is the creature of the people', though Mr. Locke himself should attempt to defend it, is utterly indefensible' ('Observations on Liberty' (1776), pp. 18-19; in Works, XI, 104).

[124] 'The Late Work of God in North America' (1778), BEW, III, 607.

resisted. It is suffice to say that for Wesley, liberty was a part of the image of God, an image which guaranteed certain human rights. But to press a political theory which propagated a definition of liberty which sought to usurp the power of God was not a liberty in the image of God, but the image of Satan, the essence of original sin itself. This in itself could be the cause of 'National Sins and Miseries', which were subject to punishment by God.[125] To Wesley, a liberty which saw people as the origin of power, and not God was liberty in the image of Satan. The positive side of Wesley's concept of liberty was that it was to be used to maintain a right relationship with God as creator, and with other human beings, as God's creation in the Divine image. Even his concept of liberty was marked by a shift from being rational to relational.

2.7. The Moral Image of God

The third area in which Adam was created in the image of God was in a moral image, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness,[126] which entailed 'the knowledge of God, his will, and his law'.[127] This is the most relational of all the aspects of the image of God, and after reading Watts, Wesley would say to Taylor, 'this is the chief part of that 'image of God' in which man was originally created.'[128] He used the attributes of righteousness and true holiness to describe the image of God before his 1757 extraction of Watts,[129] but after 1757 they were specifically subsumed under the moral image. Likewise, he had developed an understanding of the moral law in his sermon 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the

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[125] 'National Sins and Miseries' (1775), BEW, III, 569-76.

[126] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 475; 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 411.

[127] ENNT (1755), Colossians 3.10.

[128] DOS, Works, IX, 341, 381; ENOT (1765), Gen. 1.26; cf. Arminius, Works (1825), II, 151.

[129] ENNT (1755), Ephesians 4.24.

Law' (1750).[130] But again, it was not until after his reading of Watts that it could be applied to, and subsumed under, the heading of the moral image of God. In short, the moral image of God was knowledge of God's moral law. Rather than discuss the moral law here, it will be discussed under the heading of prevenient grace, for reason that will be more obvious then. What can be said now is that to this moral law, God 'required full obedience in every point[...]. No allowance was made for any falling short'.[131] This meant Adam walked with God by sight, not by faith, as faith is presupposed by sin, based upon a covenant of works, not grace.[132] In keeping the moral law, Adam '"loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his mind, and soul, and strength"'.[133]

> Either the new-created man loved God supremely, or not. If he did not, he was not innocent; since the very law and light of nature require such a love to God. If he did, he stood disposed for every act of obedience. And this is true holiness of heart.[134]

For Wesley, this was the essence of Adam's original righteousness, and true holiness, which was,

> the love of God, governing the senses, appetites, and passions[...]properly and directly, a right temper or disposition of mind, or a complex of all right tempers.[135]

Or, to put it yet another way,

> The love of God is righteousness, the moment it exists in any soul[...]. And yet he had a power either to follow the dictates of that love, (in which case his righteousness would have endured for ever,) or to act contrary

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[130] For the significance of this development see Outler, 'Introduction: (1750), BEW, II, 1-3.

[131] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 184.

[132] 'The Law Established through Faith' (1750), BEW, II, 27; 'The Law Established through Faith, II' (1750), II, 39-40; cf. 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), I, 203 and note 210, where the dialectic between the covenant of works and grace is taken up by Wesley. Cf. Arminius, Works (1825), II, 22-24, who specifies that Adam had no need for faith in Christ.

[133] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 184.

[134] Isaac Watts, Ruin and Recovery of Mankind (1740), p. 6 as extracted by Wesley in DOS, Works, IX, 354. It was also quoted on p. 345, but as Wesley found it in Taylor SDOS, p. 186.

[135] DOS, Works, IX, 342.

> thereto; but love was righteousness still, though it was not irresistible.[136]

This was not just 'negative righteousness', or even an imputed righteousness, but a positive, and dynamic righteousness and holiness, experienced, and maintained by Adam's obedience to the moral law before the fall.[137] Because he was righteous and holy he was also happy. In holiness was the fullness of love, and happiness was the enjoyment of that love.[138]

In this way the moral law and original righteousness were also joined together in love. The love of God is righteousness, a righteousness lost in original sin, but restored in entire sanctification. Each aspect of the moral image of God, and the moral law has love as a focus. Love was the essential character of the moral image, and the moral law of God, as seen in Adam before the fall, and the essence of righteousness.[139] The fullness of the moral image was contingent upon Adam's obedience to the moral law.

In all, before the fall, Adam's political, natural, and moral image of God resulted in the supreme perfection of man-morally, physically, spiritually, and intellectually.[140] There was perfect balance and symmetry in all human relationships- between humanity and God, between humanity itself, and between humanity

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[136] DOS, Works, IX, 344. For Taylor's objections to the notion that Adam loved God supremely see, pp. 345-46.

[137] See Outler's comments in BEW, I, 196 note 90, where he directs inquiries to St. Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', 3.22.5; and St. Athanasius, 'Contra Gentes', §3.

[138] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 185 and note 18; 'The Mystery of Iniquity' (1783), BEW, II, 452

[139] This doctrine was in conflict with Taylor's own understanding of original righteousness. Taylor argued that,

> to say, God created Adam righteous, is to affirm a contradiction, or what is inconsistent with the very nature of righteousness. For a righteousness wrought in him without his knowledge or consent, would have been no righteousness at all (Taylor, SDOS (1750), p. 161, in DOS, Works, IX, 342).

Wesley's counter-argument was simply that Adam's original righteousness consisted of the image of God in which 'man was originally created' (DOS, Works, IX, 341).

[140] DOS, Works, IX, 293. The texts he was discussing with Taylor at in that particular context were Ephesians 2.15. 19-22; 4.22, 24; Colossians 3.8-12; 2 Corinthians 4.16; Romans 12.2; Titus 3.3-5.

and creation, giving the concept of original righteousness an understanding of the original 'rightness' of all human relationships. This rightness of relations meant Adam's pleasure was uninterrupted by evil of any kind. Neither his body nor his mind knew sorrow or pain of any kind. He was incapable of suffering. 'To crown all, he was immortal.'[141] This was a notion explored early in his career, but not fully developed until the latter part, when he became more concerned with speculative anthropology.[142]

Using the categories of political, natural, and moral image was a significant development for Wesley in at least two ways. First, in terms of his empirical anthropology, it was under the heading of moral image that Wesley started to develop an understanding of the moral law, and eventually the concepts of conscience, and prevenient grace, which will be discussed more fully in chapter five. In doing so, there was a shift from the image of God being primarily rational, as was seen in his 1730 sermon, 'The Image of God', to being essentially relational. Secondly, this will also prove to be a crucial development in Wesley's understanding of the order of salvation, particularly Christian perfection. A comparison of two sermons, 'Christian Perfection' (1741) with 'On Perfection' (1784) reveals that it was only after 1757 that Wesley started to think of Christian perfection as being renewed in the moral image of God.[143] While Wesley may well not have started preaching the attainability of Christian perfection in this lifetime until after his reading of Gell in 1741, he did not have a working definition of original sin which would have accommodated such a view until after

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[141] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 438-40.

[142] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 294 and note 10; 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 438-39; 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 474; 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 405-07; 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 72-73; 'The New Creation' (1785), BEW, II, 510; 'On Temptation' (1786), BEW, III, 159; 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 162.

[143] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 75.

his reading of Watts.[144] These new-found categories enabled Wesley to have 'perfection' without 'perfectionism'. The significance of this will be developed in a later chapter.

2.8. Summary of Development

In the development of Wesley's concept of the image of God there were these important aspects: (1) the image of God as understanding, will, and liberty, and the original righteousness of Adam which reflected both a rational understanding of the image of God, and Wesley's aesthetic theme of creation; (2) the trinitarian hermeneutic which sought to understand creation from a trinitarian point of view; (3) the poetic expression of this hermeneutic in the trinitarian hymns of Charles as published by John, especially as those hymns appeared in the Collection; and, (4) the influence of Watts and the formation of the political, natural, and moral image of God, which incorporated his earlier ideas on Adam's original righteousness, and the trinitarian aspects of the image of God. This marked a shift from the image of God being rational to the image being relational in character.

It must be emphasized again that the creation of the category of the moral image of God was an important development for Wesley's own Christian system, especially where his understanding of Christian perfection was concerned. The category of the moral image of God corresponded well to Wesley's notion of Christian perfection being the renovation of the moral image of God, which resulted in right relationships between God and neighbour, as will be seen later.

The fall of the first man and woman is where speculative anthropology ended for Wesley, and empirical anthropology began. Because of the image of God in the soul of man, speculative anthropology said as much about the doctrine of God as it did the doctrine of humanity. Empirical anthropology, on the other hand, says more

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[144] Outler, BEW, I, 83-85.

about the doctrine of humanity than the doctrine of God. In the same respect, in speculative anthropology, Wesley's Adam was created in God's image. His empirical anthropology tended to create fallen Adam in fallen humanity's image. Without the fall the entire image of God, 'in which Adam was first created, now remains in all his posterity'.[145] To Wesley it was clearly evident this was not the case. What this section will attempt to do is outline Wesley's understanding of the nature and consequences of Adam's fall.

3. The Fall and Its Consequences: Empirical Anthropology

When Wesley spoke of 'the Fall', he technically spoke of a series of events which began with Eve's unbelief, and ended with the eating of the fruit, and the breaking of the moral law.[146]

> Here sin began, namely, unbelief. 'The woman was deceived,' says the Apostle.[147] She believed a lie: she gave more credit to the word of the devil than to the word of God. And unbelief brought forth actual sin.[148]

It will perhaps be remembered that in the sermon, 'The Law Established Through Faith' (1750) Wesley said faith did not exist under the covenant of works, because faith presupposed sin. It would initially appear either Wesley contradicted himself, or he changed his mind. If one gives Wesley the benefit of the doubt, 'belief' in this context means thinking God to be true. If living under a covenant of works meant Eve knew nothing of faith, more specifically 'saving faith', she could still 'believe' God. When she stopped believing God, she no longer thought God to be true. This is what brought about the actual sin. When Wesley talked about personal sin (the subject of the next chapter) there was a deliberate substitution of 'faith' for 'belief', saying, 'the loss of faith must precede the committing outward

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[145] DOS, Works, IX, 291.
[146] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 189.
[147] 1 Timothy 2.14. Cf. his comments in ENNT (1755).
[148] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 402-03.

sin.'[148] Sin was not defined here in terms of unbelief. Unbelief led to sin, just as faith led to obedience.

With Adam, however, it was a different matter. It was, 'Not by sinful inclinations but by yielding to temptation, he did lose the love and image of God'.[150] This temptation was not because he was deceived by Eve (who was 'more easily deceived, and more easily deceives'), but because he was persuaded by her.[151] He

> sinned with his eyes open. He rebelled against his Creator, as is highly probable,
> Not by stronger reason moved,
> But fondly overcome with female charms.[152]
> And if this was the case there is no absurdity in the assertion of a great man that 'Adam sinned in his heart before he sinned outwardly, before he ate of the forbidden fruit;' namely by inward idolatry, by loving the creature more than the Creator.[153]

If Adam had been persuaded it was certainly not on rational grounds, but by feminine charms in an appeal to the senses.[154] Through his action he exemplified the human propensity to worship creature rather than Creator. While all individuals might be born 'atheists in the world', this 'does not screen us from *idolatry*. In his natural state every man born into the world is

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[148] 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 441; cf. 'The Wilderness State' (1760), BEW, II, 208-11, 214-17.

[150] DOS, Works, IX, 345.

[151] ENNT (1755), 1 Timothy 2.14; cf. 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 403, 410.

[152] Notice once again the influence of Milton, cf. Paradise Lost, IX.998-99.

[153] 'On the Fall of Man' (1783), BEW, II, 403; cf. ENNT (1755), Romans 1.25; 'Spiritual Idolatry' (1781), BEW, III, 103-14; 'Dives and Lazarus' (1788), BEW, III, 15; 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 179; 'On the Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 144-45; 'The Deceitfulness of the Human Heart' (1790), BEW, IV, 154.

[154] In, 'Wiser than the Children of Light' (1735), BEW, IV, 366, Wesley said that such a temptation was to tempt one at one's most tender part about us, 'through the Eve of our natures'. For an even more provocative view of women see 'Hymns for Children, and Others of Riper Years' (1768), 'HYMNS for GIRLS. HYMN LXVII'.

'1 Ah! dire effect of female pride!/ How deep our mother's sin, and wide,/ Thro' all her daughters spread!/ Since first she pluck'd the mortal tree,/ Each woman would a goddess be/ In her Creator's stead.

2 This fatal vanity of mind,/ A curse intail'd on all the kind,/ Her legacy we feel,/ We neither can deny nor tame/ Our inbred eagerness for fame,/ And stubbornness of will.'

a rank idolater.'[155] The meanest forms of which are pride and self-will.[156]

Wesley's exegesis of the Genesis passage, with its dire warning of the risk of succumbing to the wiles of feminine allurement, and putting one's wife above God's command, must be put in the context of Wesley's own views on sexuality and marriage. His hearty endorsements of a single life were made public in a series of tracts, 'Thoughts on Marriage and a Single Life' (1743), 'Thoughts on a Single Life' (1765),[157] and, 'A Thought upon Marriage' (1785).[158] In the last one he warned that seeking happiness in a wife was no different from idolatry. Then, quoting himself from, 'On the Fall of Man' (1783), he remarked, 'Is it not, in effect, loving the creature more than the Creator?'[159] Adam's fall could also be a Methodist preacher's fall by putting wife and family before the circuit.[160]

The point really to be made here is that like Augustine, Wesley believed Adam and Eve sinned in their hearts before eating the fruit.[161] Eve was deceived and no longer believed, and Adam was persuaded and no longer loved. For Wesley, inward idolatry and unbelief were the spiritual dynamics precipitating the fall, and becoming the, 'description of the existential situation of man throughout history', making faith and love, trust

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[155] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 179 and note 41, where Outler states, 'Cf. Thomas Manton, Works (1681), IV.41: 'Every man is naturally an idolater, and he makes the creature his God;' also, Stephen Charnok, Works (1684), I.4: 'that secret atheism which is in the heart of every man by nature'.'

[156] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 179.

[157] Works, XI, 456-63.

[158] Works, XI, 463-65; cf. JWL, VI, 139 (1775).

[159] 'A Thought upon Marriage', AM, 8(1785), in Works, XI, 463-65.

[160] The Freudian analysis of this and other aspects of Wesley's ministry will be left up to the likes of Abelove, Evangelist of Desire (1990).

[161] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 403 and n.; cf. Augustine, Enchiridion (421-3), §13, 45. Attention should also be given to Wesley (DOS, Works, IX, 417), quoting Samuel Hebden, Doctrine of Original Sin (1741), where no less than six sins were listed as being implied in the fall, viz. unbelief, irreverence, ingratitude, pride and ambition, sensuality, and robbery.

and relationships, the crux of issue of sin.[162] In a more secondary way, it also established a paradigm for the relationship between inward and outward sin, which will play an important part in his understanding of personal sin.[163] It was the inward sin which preceded and gave rise to the outer, resulting in the fall. This will be discussed later as the 'ordo peccare'.

When Adam and Eve sinned, they did so freely. As seen in the previous chapter, this single act of willful disobedience (with all the paradoxes it created) is, for Wesley, what accounts for the presence of evil, sin, pain, and suffering in the world. Original sin was entirely a moral issue, not an aesthetic one. It all happened because the moral law was violated and the Adamic covenant was broken, 'and by breaking this glorious law wellnigh effaced it out of his heart',[164] not because there was a material defect in either Adam or creation.[165] This was 'the Fall'. What followed was God's punishment and the consequences of Adam's willful disobedience.

3.1. The Loss of the Moral Image

Corresponding to his theodicy and accounting for evil not aesthetically, but morally, is the loss of the

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[162] In this respect Wesley provides the answers to the problem posed by Hannah, 'Original Sin and Sanctification: A Problem for Wesleyans', WTS, 18(1983)2, 49-50.

[163] 'The First-fruits of the Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 239-40, 245-46; 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 320; 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 336-44; 'Christian Perfection' (1741), BEW, II, 106; 'The Wilderness State' (1760), BEW, II, 210, 215-16.

[164] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 7.

[165] It is worthwhile to compare Wesley with Methodius on the entire issue of theodicy and the fall. See, Methodius, 'Concerning Free-Will', especially where he says, 'For this was the meaning of the gift of Free Will. And man after his creation receives a commandment from God; and from this at once rises evil, for he does not obey the divine command; and this alone is evil, namely, disobedience, which had a beginning.' Charles' poetic expression of the fall may be found in 'HYMN II', in, 'Hymns for Children, and Others of Riper Years' (1768). The first edition was probably dated 1747, although there seems to be some uncertainty about this. See Baker, Bibliography, BEW 32-33, unpublished.

moral image of God. With it, Adam lost original righteousness and true holiness,[166] that is, the image of perfect love, righteousness, and liberty. Without the image of love there is no human liberty, only slavery to sin. Without knowing and loving God, 'the image of God would not subsist'.[167] One of the first, and most profound consequences of breaking the moral law and losing the moral image was relational, as Adam and Eve experienced estrangement from, and broken communion with, God.[168] They no longer loved God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. They no longer loved God because they no longer trusted God, or believed God to be true. The disintegration of their relationship with the Divine quickly resulted in the experiences of guilt, sorrow, fear, and despair.[169] The estranged relationship between the human and Divine eventually resulted in dysfunctional human relationships. The cause of this dysfunction was they no longer loved their neighbour as themselves. More than anything else, the loss of the moral image meant the loss of communion with God, and the beginning of a dysfunctional relationship between Adam and Eve. It is particularly this relational aspect of original sin Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification will seek to restore. The moral image as a part of original righteousness represented the perfection of this relational aspect.

The loss of the moral image of God from the soul was compared to, and as traumatic as, the loss of the soul from the body, equating the loss of the moral image with spiritual death. In other words, the loss of relationality resulted in spiritual death. This spirit-

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[166] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 411.

[167] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 189.

[168] DOS, Works, IX, 283-84; cf. 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 179, 'The will of God meantime is not in his [the one who bears the image of Satan instead of the image of God] thoughts, is not considered in the least degree; although it be the supreme rule of every intelligent creature, whether in heaven or earth, resulting from the essential, unalterable relation which all creatures bear to their Creator.'

[169] 'On the Fall of Man' (1783), BEW, II, 403, 410; DOS, Works, IX, 241.

ual death was eventually followed by physical death,[170] which 'hastened on to death everlasting', or the eternal loss of relationality with God.[171] Taylor objected to such an all-encompassing notion of death, saying, 'no evil but temporal death came upon men in consequence of Adam's sin'.[172] Wesley's counter-argument was that God made Adam a living soul in an immortal body, that is, a duality. As a consequence of his eating the forbidden fruit, God took from him the lives he gave Adam as a living soul, and Adam suffered 'all evils which could befal his soul and body; death temporal, spiritual, and eternal'.[173]

> For the moment he tasted that fruit he died. His soul died, was separated from God; separate from whom the soul has no more life than the body has when separate from the soul.[174]

Although a duality, the body and soul were actually a unity. What affected one affected the other.[175]

If the moral image of God was the chief way in which Adam was created in the image of God, then the loss of the moral image (resulting in the loss of original righteousness), and its relational aspects should be the primary way in which one thinks about Wesley on original sin, thus correcting distortions and deficiencies of many traditional post-Wesley views of sin. When looked at in this way it can be said that Wesley's underlying understanding of original sin is the deprivation of the moral image of God and original righteousness, providing a relational and ethical

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[170] One of Wesley's explanations for Adam's physical death was atherosclerosis, see 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 297 and note 19.

[171] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 185; cf. 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 296; DOS, Works, IX, 241, 245.

[172] DOS, Works, IX, 240.

[173] DOS, Works, IX, 245. Cf. 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 227.

[174] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 185. Cf. 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 189. Cf. Gregory Nazianzen, 'Oration II' §17, '[...]the soul may be to the body what God is to the soul[...]'.

[175] 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 165; 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 296.

understanding of original sin.[176] Entire sanctification then becomes the restoration and purification of right relationships between one's self, God, and neighbour.

3.2. The Marring of the Natural, and Political Images

But Wesley's view of original sin was not exclusively understood in terms of deprivation. The deprivation of the moral image and the consequence of relational estrangement inevitably resulted in the marring, and the depravation of the natural, and the political images.[177] All of Adam's personhood was corrupted by the fall.

The natural image (Adam's rationality and understanding) was not lost as much as it was marred.[178] Adam did not become an arational creature, but an irrational one. The evidence of this could be seen in the 'absurdity' of Adam attempting to hide himself among the trees of the garden from the 'eye of Omniscience'.[179] His understanding was marred by error and ignorance, confusion and mental slowness, largely because it 'found the want of suitable organs'.[180] 'And by sad experience we find that this "corruptible body presses down the soul"'.[181] Original sin was what

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[176] Aspects said to be lacking in Wesley by Hynson, 'Original Sin as Privation', WTJ, 22(1987)2, 69. Cf. Hannah, 'Original Sin and Sanctification: A Problem for Wesleyans', WTJ, 18(1983)2, 47-53; Wynkoop, A Theology of Love (1972), pp. 165-83.

[177] This view of deprivation resulting in depravation was one picked by many Wesleyan theologians after Wesley, but one largely ignored by others. See, Hannah, 'Original Sin as Privation', WTJ, 22(1987)2, 70-79.

[178] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 474-5. Wesley extracted Samuel Hebden, Doctrine of Original Sin (1741), who traces the doctrine of original sin as being the loss of the image of God back to Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', 3.20.2; 4.10.1-2); and, Tertullian, 'The Soul's Testimony', 3; see, DOS, Works, IX, 430.

[179] DOS, Works, IX, 242. This was Wesley quoting Hervey, Thereon and Aspasio, 'Dialogue 11', Works (1819), II, 357-58. Cf. 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 403.

[180] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 298.

[181] It is derived from Wisdom of Solomon 9.15 in, 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 405; also in 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 130 (on Wesley's use of the Apocrypha see note 18), 135; 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 165, 166; 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 298.

placed limits upon human understanding. His mental capacity decreased, while his life became filled with 'grief and anger and hatred and fear and shame[...]'.[182] The human mind had no freedom left, and consequently, no liberty, or virtue.

> Indeed, what else could the human mind do when it had no freedom left? Liberty went away with virtue; instead of an indulgent master it was under a merciless tyrant. The subject of virtue became the slave of vice. It was not willingly that the creature obeyed vanity; the rule was now perforce; the sceptre of gold was changed into a rod of iron. Before, the bands of love indeed drew him toward heaven; yet if he would, he could stoop down to earth. But now, he was so chained down to earth he could no so much as lift up his eyes toward heaven.[183]

Freedom had been exchanged for slavery, tyranny was experienced instead of benevolence, and virtue was lost to vice. All this points to the fact that even the inner-personal relationship, and the harmony between body and soul was critically effected. 'For all this we may thank Adam'.[184]

The political image was marred as well, influencing Adam's relationship with the world around him. The chain of being become as dysfunctional. Adam ceased to mediate blessing to the remainder of the brute creation,[185] with which he started to be in conflict. 'As man is deprived of *his* perfection, his loving obedience to God, so brutes are deprived of *their* perfection, their loving obedience to man'.[186] Wesley even questioned whether we have any dominion over the brutes at all as a result of Adam's sin, saying, 'I may shoot a bear, and then eat him; yet I have no dominion, unless it be over his carcass'.[187] Disorder and chaos became a way of life. All were subject to 'vanity', and became victims to that barbarous and ravenous 'monster, death,

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[182] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 298.
[183] 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 298-99.
[184] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 423.
[185] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 442.
[186] 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 443.
[187] DOS, Works, IX, 347-48, 353.

the conqueror of all that breathe'.[188] Wesley said with Watts, 'If beasts suffer, then man is fallen'.[189] To top it all off, weeds grew from the soil in which Adam consequently had to toil.[190] In general, Adam was totally corrupt 'in every faculty of the soul', with 'no soundness in the soul', and he was consequently responsible for the corruption of the world around him.[191]

3.3. Original Sin and Total Depravity

In this respect, Wesley did not lack in 'negative superlatives' in describing humanity apart from the grace of God.[192] 'By nature ye are wholly corrupted'.[193] We are '"conceived in sin", and "shapen in wickedness"', so that in our natural state there is '"no good thing"'. All imagination and thoughts of the heart are '"evil", "*only* evil", and that "continually"'.[194]

There were several metaphors used by Wesley to describe this total depravity. One was the 'image of Satan'. Using the strongest language possible, Wesley said that instead of the image of God, Adam became stamped with the image of Satan, the personification of pride, self-will, and self-love.[195] Adam even demon-

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[188] 'The New Creation' (1785), BEW, II, 508-9 (Wesley's adjective for the monster was actually 'fell', but see Outler's note 44); cf. 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 395; 'The General Deliverance' (1781), BEW, II, 443.

[189] DOS, Works, IX, 389, quoting Isaac Watts, Ruin and Recovery of Mankind, p. 389.

[190] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 405.

[191] 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 225; cf. ENNT (1755), Romans 6.6; and, DOS, Works, IX, 319, '[...]when man, the lord of the visible creation, rebelled against God, every part of the creation began to suffer on account of his sin.'

[192] Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1989), p. 22.

[193] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 185. Cf. 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 185; 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1760), BEW, I, 212; 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 225; 'The Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 403; 'Self-denial' (1760), BEW, II, 242.

[194] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 183; cf. Psalms 51.5, Romans 7.18.

[195] On the 'image of Satan' see, BEW, XIX, 97 (1739); 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 351; 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 179; 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 190; 'The One Thing

(continued...)

strated a resemblance with 'the image of the beast, in sensual appetites and desires'.[196] The marred was mixed with the Satanic, and even the beastly. Another metaphor Wesley frequently used was that of sin as disease. Wesley used medical metaphors of sin as a disease, and sickness, more than he used legal, or forensic ones, which had dominated the Western doctrine of salvation since the time of Anselm.[197] He said, '"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores."'[198] He often referred to the disease more specifically as 'leprosy'. When the image of God was lost sin overspread the entire human soul, like a 'loathsome leprosy' until it corrupted the soul's every power and faculty.[199] It is not just that a part of us is missing. Because of self-love's perversity the part of our humanity that remains is sick. Without the image of God Adam became sick with a leprosy of the soul.[200] Wesley said, 'Know your disease!'

> But he continued to say just as insistently,
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> Know your cure! Ye were born in sin; therefore 'ye must be born again,' 'born of God'. By nature ye are wholly corrupted; by grace ye

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[195](...continued)
Needful' (1734), IV, 355; BEW, XIX, 97 (1739). Cf. J. Arndt, True Christianity, Chapter 2, 'What the Fall of Adam Is', which can be found in Wesley's CL, I, 172; and Luther, Works, I, 63.

[196] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 190.

[197] Outler, BEW, I, 79. Cf. 'The Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 404; 'The One Thing Needful' (1734), BEW, IV, 356, 357; 'The Trouble and Rest of Good Men' (1735), BEW, III, 533-34; 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, VI' (1748), BEW, I, 586; 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 184; 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 323 and note 43; 'On the Death of George Whitefield' (1770), BEW, II, 342; 'On the Education of Children' (1783), BEW, III, 349; 'On Friendship with the World' (1786), BEW, III, 134-35; 'Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity' (1789), BEW, IV, 86-7.

[198] Isaiah 1.5-6 in, 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 176.

[199] cf. Gregory Nazianzen, 'Oration II', §§ 21-22.

[200] 'The One Thing Needful' (1734), BEW, IV, 354; also, see BEW, VII, nos., 1, 31, 38, 47, 68, 82, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 383, 384, 385, 386, etc. Cf. Luther, Works, I, 62, 64. 'But after the Fall death crept like leprosy into all our perceptive powers, so that with our intellect we cannot even understand that image'. Susanna Wesley is also known to have used this metaphor, see Works, XXV, 382 (1734).

> shall be wholly renewed. 'In Adam ye all died;' in the second Adam, 'in Christ, ye all are made alive.'[201]

Wesley often used analogies of sin as a sickness, and the Platonic concept of 'therapy of the soul'[202] as salvation. The hymns of John and Charles Wesley are a catalogue of such analogies between sin and sickness, 'therapy of the soul' and salvation. Examples of these analogies can be seen in the following:

> Speak, gracious Lord, my sickness cure,
> Make my infected nature pure[...][203]

> My Sin's incurable disease,
> Thou, Jesus, thou alone canst heal[...][204]

> Wouldst thou the body's health restore,
> And not regard the sin-sick soul?
> The sin-sick soul thou lov'st much more,
> And surely thou shalt make it whole.[205]

This genre of medical analogies provided an alternative way of looking at the problem of sin, and a fresh way of looking at salvation as sin's solution. It is a view which sees original sin as a sickness resulting from the lost image of righteousness, holiness, and love, marring the character of humanity, i.e. body, soul, and spirit, and sees salvation as healing, resulting in wholeness, holiness, and love.

Where total depravity was concerned Wesley certainly stood with the Reformers. The reason for Wesley having such a strong doctrine of total depravity was somewhat simple. 'This then is the foundation of the new birth- the entire corruption of our nature',[206] hence the logicality of the sermon, 'Original Sin' preceding the sermon, 'The New Birth' in volume four of Sermons on Several Occasions (1760). But by using the strongest language possible Taylor accused Wesley of

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[201] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 185.
[202] 'Therapeia psucheis', or 'therapy of the soul' is a Platonic concept found in Politia, IX:585.D; Laches, 185e; Gagias, 513a; Republic, 585a. Wesley uses the Greek phrase at least twice, DOS, Works, IX, 194; 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 184.
[203] BEW, VII, 238.
[204] BEW, VII, 556-557.
[205] BEW, VII, 559.
[206] 'The New Birth' (1760), BEW, II, 190.

having a depravity that was so total it seemed to despise humanity. When this charge was made by Taylor, Wesley argued, the cross was sufficient reason to deny God's despising depraved humanity, and cause enough for the children of God to love as they have been loved.[207]

But what separated Wesley from the Reformers was prevenient grace, the first step in the order of salvation. In this respect there was no such thing as a 'natural man', as everyone had a certain measure of prevenient grace. This will not be explored here, but in chapter five.

3.4. Summary

Wesley firmly believed that what we have lost in Adam is an essential part of our humanity- our image of God, and our relationship with God. Without these we are incomplete. Without these, 'no man shall see the Lord'. As a result, the individual's relationship with God is estranged. But the relationships with those about us are also strained because we seek to manipulate them to serve us. We do not love our neighbours as ourselves. Sin is love locked onto the self, and the quintessential personification of that selfishness is Satan, whose image fallen humanity bears. Because this love is so void of God's image it is perverse, ironically, making it the strongest form of self-hatred possible. Self-love in the image of Satan is a love that seeks to devour all in its path, especially the self. This self-love could even be said to be the root of all sin.[208] How can we love ourselves properly until we love God first, and with all our being? Quoting Augustine's Confessions, Wesley would say, 'Thou has made us for thyself; and our heart cannot rest till it resteth in thee.'[209]

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[207] DOS, Works, XIX, 327.

[208] BEW, XXV, 331 (1732), Susanna's remark to John.

[209] Augustine, Confessions, I.i in, 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 64 and note 27. Found also in Wesley's extract of John Norris, 'A Treatise on Christian Prudence', 3rd ed. (1749), p. 4.

By looking at original sin as the lost image of God, as a disease tantamount to spiritual leprosy, and as lost and dysfunctional relationships, the emphasis is shifted from sin being a 'thing', to sin being a deprivation of God's image, spiritual health, love for God and neighbour. Sin then becomes moral, and relational. A humanity without the image of God is a sick humanity. But such is an individual's natural state.[210] Only Christ can heal us of this 'loathsome leprosy', heal our souls, and restore our relationships between ourselves and God, and ourselves and our neighbours.[211] Prevenient grace was the first step made towards a sinner's recovery. But faith alone is able to make the sinner completely whole, 'which is the one medicine given under heaven to heal' our sin sick souls.[212] Faith must precede the renovation of love just as surely as trust must precede the re-establishment of an estranged relationship.

4. The Fall and Christology, or Adam and Christ

However, before ending our discussion of original sin some attention needs to be given to relationship between the fall of Adam and the death of Christ. At one point it was stated in the Doctrine of Original Sin, '"Christianity lies properly in the knowledge of what concerns Adam and Christ."'[213] Knowledge of the relations between Adam and Christ provides another insight into eternal reason as 'the nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them'. In Wesley's thought there are three profound links in the relation between Christ and Adam. The first theme regards Adam as a 'federal head', and Christ as the 'representative of all mankind'. The second theme looks upon original sin as the 'felix

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[210] Cf. Wesley's extraction of Thomas Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State[...] (1720) in Works, IX, 443, 449.

[211] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1750) BEW, IV, 477.

[212] 'The Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 404.

[213] This is Wesley (in DOS, Works, IX, 429), quoting Samuel Hebden (Doctrine of Original Sin, 1741), quoting Augustine. I have not yet found the precise location of the Augustine quote.

culpa', or the happy fault, which was based upon the assumption that if Adam had not sinned, Christ had not died. The third theme is based upon the 'recapitulation' of Adam in Christ, or what we lost in Adam, we gain in Christ. All three themes are intertwined together and significant consequences of the original sin, serving as links between creation and redemption, the fall of Adam and the death of Christ, consequently creating essential links between hamartiology and soteriology.

4.1. 'The Head of All Mankind'

The presupposition to both 'O felix culpa!' and the theme of 'recapitulation' was in many respects Adam as 'the federal head'. To Wesley, Adam was the 'representative of mankind', or a 'federal head'. He joined in the debate which was actually between Watts and Taylor, carried on in Taylor's 'Supplement' to his, Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin. In responding to 'Section VI' of Taylor's 'Supplement', Wesley said,

> My reason for believing he was so [that Adam was 'a federal head or representative of mankind'], in some sense, is this: Christ was the representative of mankind, when God 'laid on him the iniquities of us all, and he was wounded for our transgressions.' But Adam was a type or figure of Christ; therefore, he was also, in some sense, our representative; in consequence of which, 'all died' in him, as 'in Christ all shall be made alive.'
>
> But as neither representative, nor federal head, are scripture words, it is not worth while to contend for them. The thing I mean is this: The state of all mankind did so far depend on Adam, that, by his fall, they all fell into sorrow, and pain, and death, spiritual and temporal. And all this is noways inconsistent with either the justice or goodness of God, provided all may recover through the Second Adam, whatever they lost through the first; nay, and recover it with unspeakable gain; since every additional temptation they feel, by that corruption of their nature which is antecedent to their choice, will, if conquered by grace, be a

> means of adding to that 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'[214]

His reasoning started with Christ as a representative of mankind and went back to Adam, who was seen as a prefigure of Christ. On this link it was reckoned that if we were not ruined by the first Adam, who was the representative of humankind, neither can we be restored by the second Adam, who is Christ.[215] Likewise, if we do not derive our corruption from Adam, neither do we derive our new nature from Christ.[216]

In Doctrine of Original Sin, Wesley particularly stressed Adam as the federal head, and drew upon Jennings in the defense of the six propositions of the Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines to build his case. The first proposition said,

> The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned with him, and fell with him, in that first transgression.[217]

Because he was a public person, or a federal head his sin was imputed to all his posterity.[218]

At this point Wesley's traducianism is linked to the concept of Adam as a federal head. The image of God was created in Adam's soul. But it is also the soul which reproduces and replicates the image of a fallen humanity, void of the moral image and marred in the natural and political images. In a letter to Dr. John Robertson, when Wesley was presented with the 'three

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[214] DOS, Works, IX, 332. He also quotes, James Hervey, Theron and Aspasio, Works, II, 150-51 for support; and, David Jennings, A Vindication of the Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin (1740), pp. 18-24 in DOS, Works, IX, 255-57; Isaac Watts, The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind (1740), in DOS, Works, IX, 376, 379, 380; cf. 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 185-86; and Hymn 125 in BEW, VII, 236.

[215] On the federal headship of Christ see 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 190 and note, where Outler attributes this concept to Hugo Grotius, De Veritate Religionis Christianae (1642), which Wesley would probably known through Le Clerc's 1709 revision.

[216] Wesley quoting Hebden, Doctrine of Original Sin (1741), in DOS, Works, IX, 428-29.

[217] DOS, Works, IX, 262.

[218] DOS, Works, IX, 393-97, where he again extracts Isaac Watts, Ruin and Recovery of Mankind, pp. 427-448; and Samuel Hebden in DOS, Works, IX, 409-15.

opinions concerning the transmission of original sin', immediate creation, traduction, or pre-existence, Wesley responded, 'I care not if there were none. The fact I know, both by Scripture and by experience. I know it is transmitted: but *how* it is transmitted I neither know nor desire to know.'[219] Four years later in Doctrine of Original Sin, he admitted, 'And if you ask me, how, in what determinate manner, sin is propagated; how it is transmitted from father to son: I answer plainly, I cannot tell[...]'.[220] But he knew, 'You may transmit to your children a nature tainted with sin, and yet commit no sin in so doing.'[221] He was apparently trying to steer clear of any notion of concupiscence. In a fashion which was typical for Wesley he was more interested in the observable facts rather than speculation about their cause.

But it is not entirely accurate that Wesley never offered explanation for the transmission of original sin. Instead of concupiscence, he eventually used the doctrine of soul as a way of explaining the universality of original sin. Two years after his letter to Robertson, Wesley published the Explanatory Notes on the New Testament. In his comment on Hebrews 12.9, it became quite clear that he held to the immediate creation of the soul. Whether this was through insufflation or not he does not say.[222] However, such a view was inconsistent with his understanding of Adam as a federal head. If the constitutive element of personhood is the soul, the soul had to have been somehow present in Adam. The turning point came in 1762 when he received a letter challenging his view of the immediate creation of the

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[219] BEW, XXVI, 519 (1753). In this letter Wesley was specifically responding to Andrew Michael Ramsay, Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, unfolded in a Geometrical Order (2 vols, 1748-49), who opted for the pre-existence of souls in order to explain original sin.

[220] DOS, Works, IX, 335. Also, JWL, III, 107 (1753).

[221] DOS, Works, XIX, 282.

[222] ENNT (1755), Hebrews 12.9. Cf. Bengel on same passage. N.B. Augustine on insufflation in 'On the Soul and Its Origin' (419-21), 1.17.

soul.[223] This was one of the rare instances when Wesley publicly changed his opinion. He eventually extracted for publication in the Arminian Magazine, the work referred to in the letter, The Origin of the Soul.[224] There he explained original sin by what he called 'the traduction of souls from Adam', or, '*anima est ex traduce*; that all the souls of his posterity, as well as their bodies, were in our first parent'.[225] He hypothesized that when Adam sinned he lost the moral image of God, while marring the political and natural image. Since like begets like, when he begot a son, the son was in the image of fallen Adam. In his extraction of Isaac Watts, for the Doctrine of Original Sin, he said, 'Adam, after his sin, propagated his kind according to the law of nature;- not in the moral image or likeness of God; not 'in righteousness and true holiness;' but in his own sinful likeness[...]'.[226] This same thought was repeated in his extract of Thomas Boston's, Fourfold State of Man, likewise included in the Doctrine of Original Sin. From this he concluded,

> Original sin is by some defined to be, The depravation of righteousness, and inclination to evil, contracted from the generation itself, and derived from Adam to all his posterity. For as sickness is not only a privation of health, but also an evil affection of the body; so original sin is not only the want of righteousness, but also a proneness to unrighteousness, arising from the sin of Adam, and conveyed unto us by natural propagation.[227]

To say otherwise, once again, would make God the author of sin. Not to say this would allow Wesley's empirical notion of the soul as 'tabula rasa' to disallow original

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[223] JWJ, IV, 486 (1762); JWJ, V, 37-9 (1763); Cf. Augustine, 'On the Soul and its Origin' (419-21), I.16-27.

[224] In AM, 5(1782), 46-9, 195-7; 6(1783), 41-3, 96-8, 149-51, 208-10, 265-7, 321-3, 375-7, 431-5, 492-4, 544-7.

[225] AM, 5(1782), 195. See Schibli, 'Apponius on the Origin of the Soul', SP, XXIII, 178-85, where he states traducianism is found in Tertullian, while giving a helpful survey of the early fathers on this issue.

[226] DOS, Works, IX, 378; cf. 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 162.

[227] AM, 6(1783), 434.

sin. The soul is a blank slate, born in the state of atheism, but because the traduction of the soul is the traduction of a soul sick with original sin, it is a soul whose image is marred and devoid of aspects of God's image. The soul became not just a constitutive part of personhood, but an essential way to account for the universality of original sin as well. The traduction of the soul was for Wesley a metaphysical explanation of an empirical observation.

It must be added, however, that before changing to a view of traducianism in 1763, his doctrine of Christian perfection forced Wesley to admit the possibility of an 'immaculate conception'. In question 21 of 'Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1759), it was asked, 'if two perfect Christians had Children, how could they be born in Sin, since there was none in the Parents?' To which Wesley made this curious (and rather embarrassing) response:

> It is a possible, but not a probable case; I doubt whether it ever was or ever will be. But waving this, I answer, Sin is entailed upon me, not by immediate generation, but by my first parent. 'In Adam all died; by the disobedience of one, all men were made sinners;' all men, without exception, who were in his loins when he ate the forbidden fruit.[228]

In spite of his doctrine of original sin, and Adam as a federal head, Wesley's creationism had to outrageously admit that an immaculate conception was at least a possibility, if not just a logical abstraction. His traducianism would have denied such a view. Such statements as this indicate that Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection could at times be theologically misinformed and rather naive.

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[228] 'Thoughts on Christian Perfection', in SOSO (1759). What makes this response even more curious is the exchange of letters between Richard Thompson and Wesley in which this issue came up. In that particular context Wesley appears to deny the possibility, BEW, XXVI, 571 (1755), and 575 (1755). Cf. Augustine, 'On Marriage and Concupiscence', I.20 [xviii], who uses concupiscence to explain why children of wrath are born of holy matrimony.

Adam as the federal head in whom both the body and souls of all humanity existed, and the traduction of those souls from generation to generation becomes the linchpin of Wesley's empirical anthropology. We are the way Adam became after the fall because we participated in body and soul, in both the guilt and consequences of Adam's sin.[229] However, because of the cross, this fall was a 'happy fault'.

4.2. 'O Felix Culpa!'

'O felix culpa!' was introduced briefly in the last chapter on theodicy. If God is all knowing, did he not see the fall? Wesley's response was, 'He certainly did foresee the whole,'[230] in the 'eternal now'. If God saw it, could he not have stopped it? Wesley's response to this was, 'it was undoubtedly in his power to prevent it: for he hath all power both in heaven and earth.'[231] Why, then, did God permit evil? 'He saw', said Wesley, 'that to permit the fall of the first man was far best for mankind in general; that abundantly more good than evil would accrue to the posterity of Adam by his fall[...]'.[232] Because of his sin,

> We may now attain both higher degrees of holiness and higher degrees of glory than it would have been possible for us to attain if Adam had not sinned. For if Adam had not sinned, the Son of God had not died.[233]

Wesley quite clearly, and rather adamantly, believed,

> The fall of Adam produced the death Christ! Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! Yea,

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[229] DOS, Works, IX, 332; ENNT (1755), Romans VI.14. Cf. James Hervey, Works (1819), Thereon and Aspasia (1755), II, 150-51; BEW, VII, 236-37. The issue of guilt will be more fully discussed in the chapter on baptism.

[230] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 425.

[231] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 424.

[232] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 424; cf. DOS, Works, IX, 253.

[233] 'On the Fall of Man' (1782), BEW, II, 411 and note 60, cf. 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 425 and note 9. Cf. Luther, Works, I, 93, 'And the divine object of the Gospel is, that we might be restored to that original, and indeed to a better and higher, image[...]'.

Let earth and heaven agree,
Angels and men be joined,
To celebrate with me
The Saviour of mankind;
T' adore the all-atoning Lamb,
And bless the sound of Jesu's name![234]

> If God had prevented the fall of man, 'the Word' had never been 'made flesh'; nor had we ever 'seen is glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father'. Those mysteries never had been displayed 'which the very angels desire to look into'. Methinks this consideration swallows up all the rest, and should never be out of our thoughts. Unless 'by one man judgment had come upon all men to condemnation' neither angels nor men could ever have known 'the unsearchable riches of Christ'.[235]

In short, 'felix culpa' means God is to be praised for the fall, because as a result of the fall there was Incarnation. Incarnation and crucifixion are the driving force behind what is almost a doxology for the original sin.

All these references, found in the later years of Wesley's ministry, illuminate a theme Lovejoy called, 'the paradox of the Fortunate Fall'.[236] This places Wesley in the 'O felix culpa!' tradition as suggested in works by Irenaeus,[237] Augustine,[238] Ambrose,[239] Rupert of Deutz, Hugh of St. Victor, Du Bartas,[240] John Donne,[241] John Wyclif,[242] and John Milton.[243] Such a view is not without its problems.

First of all, if one applies moral categories to God, as was done in the issue of theodicy, 'felix culpa'

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[234] Charles Wesley, 'Hymns on God's Everlasting Love' (1741), p. 31. Cf. AM, 1(1778), 191-92, 'The Universal Love of Christ'.
[235] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 433.
[236] Lovejoy, History of Ideas (1965), p. 277.
[237] Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', III.xx.1.
[238] Augustine, 'On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, and on the Baptism of Infants' (411-12), 1.39-45; 2.37-8; The City of God, (413-27) 12.23.22.
[239] Ambrose, 'De Institutione Virginis' (393), 17.104; cf. 'Enarrationes in xii. Psalmos Davidicos', 39.20.
[240] Lovejoy, History of Ideas (1965), p. 279-81.
[241] John Donne, LXXX Sermons (1640), p. 171.
[242] John Wyclif, 'Sermon XC', in Select English Works of John Wyclif, Thomas Arnold, ed. (1869), I, 320-321.
[243] John Milton, Paradise Lost, XII.462 ff.

creates another divine dilemma, in which redemption takes on attributes of 'act utilitarianism',[244] that is to say, the soteriological ends justifies the hamartiological means. The happiness of holiness justifies the misery of evil. On this basis Wesley could argue with all seriousness for a view by which evil is seen as a 'positive blessing'.[245] Creation is improved upon only as a result of sin and evil, which means evil was necessary in order to make a renewed creation the best world possible.[246] In the second place, it seems to suggest God needed sin in order to warrant Incarnation, which would make Incarnation look like an afterthought, or a Divine reaction in response to human action. Any 'free-will' defense of theodicy risks drawing such a conclusion. However, this must be balanced against God's omniscience and omnipotence and their respective paradoxes, only this time in the context of Incarnation instead of theodicy. In the third place, it would seem that the paradox of the fortunate fall would ultimately render the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians meaningless and pointless. If the fall is indeed fortunate does it really matter if God is the author of sin? Given this proverbial theological Pandora's Box, Lovejoy has suggested the themes of the fall and redemption were better left separate. That is perhaps a bit extreme, but it does illuminate how the combination of 'free-will' and 'felix culpa' does create a potential systematic pressure point.

In a more positive sense, 'Felix culpa' saw in the fall not just what humanity lost through Adam, but what humanity might gain through Christ. God alone, from the

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[244] 'Act utilitarianism' seeks to assess the value of an act purely on the basis of the amount of happiness the result is able to produce.

[245] 'Death and Deliverance' (1725), BEW, IV, 213; 'On Guardian Angels' (1726), BEW, IV, 234; 'On Mourning the Dead' (1727), BEW, IV, 239; 'The Love of God' (1733), BEW, IV, 344; and in a less obvious way in 'Scriptural Christianity' (1744), BEW, I, 167-8. Note that with the exception of 'Scriptural Christianity' all the other sermons were before 1733.

[246] Schrader, 'Evil and the Best Possible Worlds', Sophia, 29(1990)2, 40.

vantage point of the 'eternal now', could see the fall from the perspective of the cross. Regardless of the cause, whether Divine or human, 'felix culpa' bound sin, Incarnation, and salvation together for Wesley, with Incarnation as the consequence of sin, and salvation the consequence of Incarnation. Salvation culminated in the renovation of the image of God in man and woman.

4.3. 'What We Lost in Adam, We Recover in Christ'

At this point 'felix culpa' is best understood in the light of 'recapitulation', the third theme. A statement from, Doctrine of Original Sin offers the simplest description of what recapitulation means,

> 'What we lost in Adam, that is, a being after the image and likeness of God, this we recover by Christ.' (Irenaeus, 1. 3. c. 20.)[247] Again 'They who receive the ingrafted word return to the ancient nature of man, that by which he was made after the image of likeness of God.' (Ibid. 1.5, c. 10.)[248] He likewise speaks of our 'sinning in Adam:' 'In the first Adam,' says he, 'we offended God; in the Second Adam, we are reconciled:' And frequently of 'man's losing the image of God by the fall, and recovering it by Christ.'[249]

This indicates Wesley's awareness of Irenaeus's doctrine of recapitulation. However, to Wesley, Christ will do more than restore what was lost. He will make improvements upon it. Glorification and the final renovation of the lost image of God would be of a 'higher degree' than all Adam's perfection, because glorification is perfection in Christ, the second Adam. Because of Incarnation, salvation is teleological, not archaeological. It renews in the image of Christ, not Adam. While Adam was the best he could possibly be, he was not the best that could possibly be. Christ is. Because of Christ, redeemed sinners will have a greater capacity for holiness than the pristine Adam, a capacity enlarged

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[247] Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', 3.18.1.
[248] Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies', 5.10.1-2.
[249] Irenaeus, Against Heresies, III.18.1-7. Also, Wesley's extraction of Samuel Hebden's Doctrine of Original Sin[...] Vindicated (his defense of the Westminster Catechism against Taylor's attacks) in Works, IX, 430.

by the sanctifying and glorifying grace of salvation.[250] Recapitulation was Wesley's ultimate answer to the problem of evil. What we lost in Adam is improved upon and restored through Christ. This justified not just the fall, but also God creating man in the image of liberty, knowing liberty would be abused resulting in sin, so human persons might be renewed in the image of Christ.[251] This reminds one once again just how Wesley justified liberty, free-will, the fall, and even evil itself all by the cross and the renovation of the image of God, enlarged and improved upon by Spirit infused grace. Or to put it more succinctly, in Wesley's way of thinking, Christian perfection justified Adam's fall. To Wesley, entire sanctification redeemed the doctrine of God from the 'no win' situation created by theodicy.

The themes of 'felix culpa', 'recapitulation', and 'federal head' do show how for Wesley much of Christianity lies properly in the knowledge of what concerns Adam and Christ.[252] However, Wesley's anthropology is not so much archaean as it is teleological, looking forward to Christ, not backward to Adam. The Christian's renovation is not in Adam's pristine image, but in Christ's glorified image. These three themes give even the doctrine of creation a teleological aim.

4.4. Summary

Wesley saw the doctrine of original sin as a Biblical doctrine which found authentic and accurate expression through various creedal forms, the Anglican, the Puritan, and eventually the Methodist. As a Biblical doctrine, original sin was an essential part of the foundation of the Christian system, and he defended it through reason, empiricism, and the epistemology of

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[250] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 434. Cf. 'God's Approbation of the His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 397-8 as referred to in note 81 above.

[251] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 434. Cf. 'God's Approbation of the His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 397-8.

[252] This is Wesley (in DOS, Works, IX, 429), quoting Samuel Hebden (Doctrine of Original Sin[...], 1741), quoting Augustine. I have not yet found the precise location of the Augustine quote.

testimony. Key to the doctrine of original sin, however, was the doctrine of the soul, which served as the receptacle for the image of God. Wesley understood this image to be one of the Triune God, and eventually expressed it as being political, natural, and moral in nature. Through the fall the moral image was lost, while the political and natural images were marred. These three strands made up both the image of God and original sin. Through the lost moral image, the relationship between God and humanity became estranged, human relationships became self-serving and dysfunctional. Through the marring of the political image, the relationship between humanity and creation also became dysfunctional. Through the marring of the natural image the relationship between body and soul also became dysfunctional. One may conclude that original sin was indeed relational for Wesley. It was concerned with the Divine and human relationship, the inner-personal relationship, and inter-personal relationships. The moral, natural, and political images also provided Wesley with a doctrine of original sin which allowed Wesley to talk about the attainability of Christian perfection in this lifetime as the renewal of the moral image of God. But from original sin spring most, if not all personal sins, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Four
Actual Sin: 'Properly' and 'Improperly So Called'

1. Introduction

In the last chapter we looked at original sin. One way Wesley described it was as an infection, or a loathsome leprosy, which infects the whole person of every person in the entire world. He was convinced that, 'From this infection of our nature (call it original sin, or what you please) spring many, if not all, actual sins.'[1] Another metaphor he used to speak of the relationship between original sin and personal sin was that of root and branches. The root of original sin bears the branches of actual sin, with all its wicked fruit.[2] These metaphors suggest a strong link between original sin and actual sin for Wesley, although original sin was not actual, or personal sin. There was a distinction to be made between imputed and actual sin.

When he came to speak of actual sin there was a variety of ways in which he spoke of it. However, the way Wesley eventually came to talk about actual sin was sin 'properly' and 'improperly' so called. Although actual sins proceed from original sin, the distinction between proper and improper sin was not developed in relation to original sin, but in relation to holy living. This would seem to suggest that Wesley's doctrine of actual sin is a complex matter.

What this chapter will seek to do is to show that in spite of the relationship between original sin and actual sin he sought to establish in the first section of Doctrine of Original Sin, his understanding of actual sin was actually developed in conjunction with his concern for holy living. After that, we shall suggest possible sources of influence for Wesley's understanding of actual sin. Finally, we shall list the different aspects of actual sin in order to look at them more systematically.

2. The Historical Development

Early in his career, at the same time he was being influenced by the holy living tradition, and was trying

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[1] Works, IV, 264, 274.
[2] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 76.

to come to terms with the origins of evil, Wesley also started to struggle with the issue of personal sin. As was the case even with the issue of 'Unde malum?' this struggle was also documented in a series of letters Wesley exchanged with family and friends from 1725-31. By looking at these letters one can trace the early development of Wesley's definition of personal sin, much of which developed in reaction to the works of Thomas à Kempis, Jeremy Taylor, and later on William Law. Each had in one way or another influenced Wesley with an emphasis on the importance of holy living. However, despite their significance to Wesley's spiritual development he did not accept them uncritically. Often he sought his mother's and father's advice on what to accept or reject about their writings (particularly those of Kempis and Taylor), and often wrote to others to advise them on similar matters. It was this reaction to Kempis, Taylor, and Law and his understanding of holy living which helped him to formulate a definition of sin which he used throughout the remainder of his career. During this period we will see three aspects of Wesley's definition start to emerge, and here they are listed as they appeared in his letters chronologically: (1) that sin does not include infirmities; (2) that sin must include a knowledge that a sinful action is contrary to God's will; (3) that sin is in some sense determined by whether it was voluntary or involuntary. These three developments are not intended to be definitive as they are didactic.

2.1. Personal Sin and the Concern for Holy Living

The prelude to this development is marked by Wesley's concern in establishing the nature of sin in relationship to holy living. It began with Wesley questioning the extreme asceticism of Kempis, which implied that the body's influence on the soul was the source of many sins, and denied any attainment of happiness, or joy in this lifetime. In a letter to his mother, he wrote,

> I can't think that when God sent us into the world he had irreversibly decreed that we should be perpetually miserable in it. If it be so, the very endeavour after happiness in this life is a sin, as it is acting in direct contradiction to the very design of our creation[...].Another of his tenets, which is indeed a natural consequence of this, is that all mirth is vain and useless, if not sinful. But why then does the Psalmist so often exhort us to rejoice in the Lord, and tell us that it becomes the just to be joyful? I think one could hardly desire a more express text than that in the 68th Psalm: Let the righteous rejoice, and be glad in the Lord; let them also be merry and joyful.[3]

At the heart of this concern is a bewilderment over the nature of sin. To which Susanna responded with what has become a well known quote in Wesleyan circles,

> I take Kempis to have been an honest, weak man, that had more zeal than knowledge, by his condemning all mirth or pleasure as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture. Would you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure, of the innocence or malignity of actions? Take this rule. Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off your relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind; that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself. And so on the contrary.[4]

Central to this description of sin was the body/soul duality and the assumption that whatever caused the body to dominate the mind was ultimately sin, which makes sin appear rather rational in nature. Reason, conscience, and spiritual sensibility are all essential to one's spiritual well being. If one is to take this as a definition of sin it is not just rational, but largely empirical and highly subjective in nature. But what Mrs. Wesley actually offered son John was more of an ascetic rule than it was a definition of sin. She modified, and significantly simplified the ascetic rule of Kempis, so as not to exclude happiness and joy, while at the same time realizing the peril of sensuality,

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[3] BEW, XXV, 162 (1725).
[4] BEW, XXV, 166 (1725), which also appeared in AM 1(1778), 33-6.

which resulted in the dualism of body and soul, rather than a duality. While this would not become his definition of sin per se, it would become an implicit principle of his ascetic rule which tried to mortify the 'triplex concupiscentia' (this will be discussed at greater length below). This asceticism profoundly influenced the formulation of his holy living ethic, which determined for many Methodists what behaviour was and was not sin. This eventually found expression, for example, in the 'General Rules of the United Societies' (1743).

2.2. Infirmities are not Sins

This concern over the nature of sin provided the context for the first development in Wesley's understanding of sin, namely that sin does not include infirmities. It resulted as a part of his reaction to Jeremy Taylor's, The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living. In another letter written June 18, 1725 to his mother, Wesley wondered if Taylor had not set the target of perfection so high that no one would be able to attain it, and wondered if some of his rules were not 'altogether impracticable'. Two other things bothered Wesley where Taylor was concerned. One was that according to Taylor, no one could have the assurance that one's sins were forgiven, which was to cause in the Christian a sense of humility. Another was Taylor's view that every 'weakness, deformity, or imperfection' as also being necessary to humility. Wesley concluded, 'God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this! Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation, and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble, who can be saved?'[5]

Where Wesley wrote his comments about weakness, deformity, or imperfection being necessary to humility, his mother added her own comment in the margin, 'Weakness, deformity, or imperfection of body are not evil in themselves, but accidentally become good or evil

[5] BEW, XXV, 168-9, cf. Taylor, Holy Living, 2.4.17.

according as they affect us and make us good or bad.'[6] Later on, in a letter responding to her son's queries Susanna Wesley incorporated this marginal annotation to her son's letter into her reply.

> Weakness, deformity, and imperfection of body are not moral evils, and may accidentally become good to us. Yet surely they are not to be desired, for strength and comeliness are valuable blessings, may be of great use, and ought to be enjoyed with thankfulness. If they prove incentives to pride, 'tis our own fault: a humble man will improve all those advantages for God's service[...].[7]

Here, she was quick to pick up on and point out that, 'Weakness, deformity, and imperfection of body' are not moral evils. The moral neutrality of weakness, deformity, and imperfection was fundamental to the concept of infirmities. These infirmities were the conditions of one's humanity and were inescapable in this lifetime. However, depending on how one reacting to infirmities determined whether they resulted in humility or pride.

2.3. The Cognitive Aspect of Sin

In a later letter to his mother, Wesley reflected upon his own personal deficiencies and imperfections and wrote,

> My being little and weak, whereas had it not been for a strange concurrence of accidents (so called in the language of men) I should very probably have been just the reverse, I can easily account for; I can readily trace the wisdom and mercy of Providence in allotting me these imperfections[...]. But here the difficulty was likely to lie: Why would Infinite Goodness permit me to contract a habit of sin even *before I knew it to be sinful*, which has been a thorn in my side almost every since? 'How can I skill of these thy ways?' So well that I am verily persuaded, had it not been for that sinful habit, I had scarce ever acquired any degree of any virtuous one. Is not this the finger of God? Surely none else could have extracted so much

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[6] BEW, XXV, 169 note 3.
[7] BEW, XXV, 173 (1725).

> good from evil! Surely it was MERCY not to hear my prayer![8]

Here, in the context of his reflection upon personal infirmities, begins the second aspect of his development, that sin must in someway include an awareness of an action being sinful. With a somewhat sarcastic note, Wesley started to develop his understanding of the importance of cognitive awareness to a proper understanding of sin, based upon the assumption that no Christian would deliberately develop a sinful habit knowing it was sin. This cognitive aspect of sin will become more fully developed in a later exchange of letters.

2.4. The Volitional Aspect of Sin

We now turn to the third aspect of Wesley's understanding of sin, i.e. that it somehow must be determined by whether an action is voluntary or involuntary. One of Wesley's earliest complete definitions of personal sin is found in a letter dated June 19, 1731, his response to Mary Pendarves's letter in which she expressed concern over the salvation of those who denied the divinity of Christ and the Trinity. Wesley responded by saying,

> That sometimes even a good man falls a prey to the cunning craftiness of these deceivers I can easily believe, having known one (otherwise) strictly virtuous person who was under that infatuation several years. That such an one has nothing to hope for from the terms of the gospel is likewise exceeding plain, seeing exactly equivalent to the words of the Church of England (who did rashly adopt them in her Liturgy), 'This faith, except every man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly', are those of the very person they thus outrage, 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' Not that we have authority to apply this general sentence to any one particular offender; because, all sin being a voluntary breach of a known law, none but he who seeth the heart, and consequently how far this breach of his law is voluntary in each particular person, can possibly know

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[8] BEW, XXV, 213 (1727), italics mine. Cf. Taylor, Unum Necessarium (1655), Chapter VIII, 'Sins of Infirmity'.

> which infidel shall perish, and which be received to mercy.[9]

The significance of this passage is that sin is not defined by unbelief, or infidelity. For Wesley, even infidelity as a sin was defined as being a voluntary breach of a known law. Something of his father's influence in this response may be seen when one looks at a letter Wesley received from his father some six years earlier. Wesley's original letter, to which his father had replied, is not extant. But from what his father said, it seems as though the issue of heresy, and theological infidelity had been under discussion. To which Wesley's father replied, 'But is there not a distinction between what is wilful and what may be in some measure involuntary? God knows, and doubtless will make a difference!'[10] The significant point for us is this- in as much as heresy was deemed a sin, it is clear Wesley started to see a difference between voluntary and involuntary sin. Wesley's response to Mary Pendarves displayed a similarity to his father's thoughts on the aspect of sin being a voluntary action.

2.5. Sin as the Wilful Transgression of the Known Law of God

The volitional aspects of sin came into maturity in the last exchange of letters we will look at, an exchange between Wesley and Ann Granville. She wrote to Wesley regarding one of her friends, a young lady who feared nothing she did was acceptable to God, and that all she did was sin. She had fasted to the point that her health had been destroyed, and was even fearful of sleep, thinking it was a sin.[11] To which Wesley responded in a pastoral tone,

> If God were to mark all that is done amiss, who could abide it? Not the great Apostle himself, who even when he had 'finished his course' on earth, and was ripe for paradise,

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[9] BEW, XXV, 289 (1731). Cf. where he applies the same principle in, 'On Schism' (1786), BEW, III, 66-7.

[10] BEW, XXV, 182, (1725). Cf. his remarks in 'On The Trinity' (1775), BEW, II, 377.

[11] BEW, XXV, 316 (1731).

> yet mentions himself as not 'having already attained' that height, not being 'already perfect'.
>
> Perfect, indeed, he was from sin, strictly speaking, which is a voluntary breach of a known law, at least from habits of such sin. As to single acts he 'knew whom he had believed'. He knew who had promised to forgive these, not seven times but seventy times even. Nay, a thousand times a thousand, if they sincerely desire it, shall all sins be forgiven unto the sons of men. We need except none.[12]

In these two letters one can see Wesley combining volitional and cognitive aspects to his understanding of personal sin. In this last letter Wesley implemented a fully developed definition of sin which he would use the remainder of his career. Sin is a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. This approximates Wesley's extracted definition of evil as being, 'a deviation from those measures of eternal, unerring order and reason- not to choose what is worthy to be chosen, and is accordingly chose by such a will as the divine,' which in turn has as its foundation the concept of eternal reason.[13] In those terms, sin properly so called is a wilful deviation from what one knows to be the eternal reason, or order of things.

2.6. Sin Properly and Improperly So Called

But the last letter did more than only provide a definition of sin. It also demonstrated Wesley's concern with defining personal sin in such a way as to include the attainability of Christian perfection in this lifetime. During this period, from 1725-31, Wesley came to this understanding of sin during his struggle with the holy living tradition as seen in Kempis, Taylor, and Law, a concern one can see not just in the early period but through the successive periods of his career. All along the way Wesley was concerned with defining actual sin to make holy living more acces-

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[12] BEW, XXV, 318-19 (1731).

[13] BEW, XXV, 241-2 (1729); cf. Ditton, Discourse (1712), pp. 424-7.

sible.[14] For this reason, it is difficult to actually discuss personal sin without also having to discuss holy living. The classic example of this came in 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766), where he said,

> Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love; nor therefore, in the Scripture sense, sin.
>
> [To explain myself a little farther on this head: (1.) Not only sin, properly so called, (that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law,) but sin, improperly so called, (that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown,) needs the atoning blood. (2.) I believe there is not such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. (3.) Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. (4.) I believe, a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. (5.) Such transgressions you may call sins, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above-mentioned.][15]

This became Wesley's definitive statement on the relationship between sin and sanctification. What one says about sin inevitably implicates the doctrine of sanctification. The attainability of Christian perfection was conditioned by the definition of actual (or personal) sin, and the definition of sin was determined by its volitional and cognitive aspects. It is one of two significant instances in which Wesley actually used the phrase 'sin, improperly so called'. The other place was in 'Remarks on Mr. Hill's Review' (1772).[16] While

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[14] e.g. 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 124; 'The First-fruits of the Spirit' (1746), BEW, 240; 'The Marks of the New Birth' (1748), BEW, I, 420-1; 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 436; 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 320; etc.

[15] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766), Works, XI, 396. Although the first edition of 'A Plain Account' appeared in 1766, it was the 4th edition (1777) which was used as the text in Works. At this point Wesley was extracting a section from his own 'Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1760). However, the section which appears in the above text in brackets did not appear in 'Thoughts on Christian Perfection', which makes it an interpolation unique to 'A Plain Account'.

[16] Works, X, 398.

sin improperly so called is implied in nearly every other instance, the term is not actually used.

2.7. The Discussions of Sin and Sanctification

The relationship between sin and sanctification continued to appear into the last decade of his life, as his sermon, 'On Perfection' revealed. There, he was answering some objections to Christian perfection from an imaginary opponent who argued that Christian perfection, 'cannot consist with salvation from sin.' To which Wesley said,

> I answer, I will perfectly well consist with salvation form sin, according to that definition of sin (which I apprehend to be the scriptural definition of it): 'a voluntary transgression of a known law'. 'Nay, but all transgressions of the law of God, whether voluntary or involuntary, are sin. For St. John says, 'All transgression of the law is sin.' This I deny: let him prove it that can.
>
> To say the truth, this a mere strife of words. You say none is saved from sin in *your* sense of the word; but I do not admit of that sense, because the word is never so taken in Scripture. And you cannot deny the possibility of being saved from sin in *my* sense of the word. And this is the sense wherein the word 'sin' is over and over taken in Scripture.[17]

From his Oxford days until the end of his career Wesley defined actual sin in such a way that made holy living, and Christian perfection attainable in this life time.

It should perhaps be pointed out that there appears to have been at least one anomaly to this distinction, which appeared in 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption' (1746), where Wesley said,

> Whosoever thou art, dost thou commit sin, or dost thou not? If thou dost, is it willingly, or unwillingly? In either case God hath told thee whose thou art- 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.' If thou committest it willingly thou art his [i.e. 'the devil's'] faithful servant. He will not fail to reward thy labour. If unwillingly, still thou art

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[17] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 79.

> his servant. God deliver thee out of his hands![18]

Here, at least, Wesley clearly indicates that sin, whether willful or not, makes one a child of the devil. Below we will see at least one example of where Wesley thought the cognitive aspect of sin was unnecessary to sin's culpability. These, however, were exceptions and not the rule. The main point to be made here is that the doctrine of personal sin was understood in order to reinforce his doctrine of Christian holiness, not the doctrine of original sin.

3. Sources of Influence

We have seen when it appeared, and we have seen examples of how he used it at different points in his own career, but where did Wesley get such a definition for actual sin? Perhaps the significance of this definition can be better understood if a brief outline of the background to the concept is given.

3.1. Its Aristotelian Roots

Historically, and philosophically the emphasis on knowledge and will as being necessary to wrong doing is found in Aristotelian ethics. Aristotle considered happiness and human perfection as legitimate objects of philosophical concern.[19] According to Aristotle every person desires what is good. It is obtaining the good which brings happiness. Aristotle listed four conditions to doing a 'just or temperate act' which contributed to one's quest for happiness: (1) one should know what one is doing; (2) one should

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[18] 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption' (1746), BEW, I, 264.

[19] Kretzmann, ed., CHLMP (1988), p. 657. There is as a particularly enlightening chapter on, 'Happiness: The Perfection of Man' in which Georg Wieland traces the Aristotelian concept of happiness in the Christian tradition. What many have overlooked is the connection between Aristotle's concept of happiness and the perfection of man and Wesley's concept of happiness as Christian holiness, which is concomitant with Christian perfection. Much work needs to be done relative to this area. For a work that started with the Aristotelian notion of the perfectibility of man and briefly mentions Wesley, see Passmore, The Perfectibility of Man (1970).

deliberately choose to do it; (3) one should choose to do it for the action's own sake; (4) one should do it as an instance of a settled and immutable moral state.[20] Similarly, anything done with knowledge and deliberation is considered a crime, while an harmful act done involuntarily or out of ignorance must be called an error.[21] Aristotle listed several ways one may be ignorant in situations. One may be ignorant of who one is, what one is doing, what or whom one is acting on, and sometimes also what one is doing it with, and what end, and even how one is doing it. However, even an action which is done involuntarily through ignorance must involve pain and regret.[22] In regards to voluntary actions, their choice must be rational and cannot relate to impossibilities.[23] In short the voluntary consists of things about which we deliberate, and we deliberate about things that are in our power to do, and things which can be done.[24] Cognition and volition were both used by Aristotle to help determine the goodness or badness of an action.

3.2. Its Theological Roots

Theologically, and more biblically the beginning of an emphasis on the differences between the severity of sins can be traced to the Patristic period as the church attempted to interpret Hebrews 6.4-8, and 10.26-31. As a result, even the 'Didache' distinguished between forgivable and unforgivable sins.[25] The Shepherd of Hermas made the same distinction based on baptism. Sins before baptism were forgivable, but sins after baptism were not.[26] Tertullian divided sin into 'spiritual' and

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[20] See, Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1103^{a}-1109^{b}.
[21] Aristotle, 'Rhetoric to Alexander', $1427^{a}24$-40.
[22] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, $1110^{b}20$-$1111^{a}21$.
[23] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, $1111^{b}5$-30.
[24] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, $1112^{a}20$-31. Cf. Plato, Laws, IX.860. But note IX.863 where ignorance is given as a cause of crime, not an excuse.
[25] 'The Teaching of the Apostles', §11.
[26] 'The Shepherd of Hermas', Man. 4.3.

'corporeal' categories,[27] and isolated what he called the 'seven deadly sins'.[28] But Tertullian would allow only one act of repentance after baptism for sins which were not deemed deadly.[29] In response to the Decian, and other persecutions as the question of the lapsed sought to divide the church, distinctions between forgivable and unforgivable sins became even more important. In 251 the Council of Carthage decided that all sins were forgivable.[30] After this a distinction was still maintained, but its meaning was changed from forgivable and unforgivable sins, to sins small and great, and sins mortal and venial.

3.3. Its Catholic Roots: Moral Theology

After 251, and the Council of Carthage, even Augustine made a 'proper' distinction between 'trivial' and 'heinous' sins, which were caused by 'ignorance' and 'weakness'.[31] Aquinas, perhaps largely through an Aristotelian influence, significantly developed the concept of 'mortal' and 'venial' sins in his Summa.[32] Eventually it was confirmed by the fourteenth session of the Council of Trent, in conjunction with the sacrament of penance and extreme unction.[33] While Wesley did not use precisely the same language as Catholic moral theology, the concept was there, a fact not wasted upon his opponents, especially McGowan (a one time Methodist-local-preacher-turned-Baptist), and Hill, who accused Wesley of being a Jesuit.[34] Naturally, wrapped up with those concepts were many Catholic doctrines Wesley would

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[27] Tertullian, 'Repentance', III.
[28] Tertullian, 'Against Marcion', IV.9.
[29] Tertullian, 'On Repentance', V; cf. 'On Baptism', XX.
[30] Cyprian, 'Epistles', LV.6, 17-23.
[31] Augustine, 'Enchiridion', §§78-81. Cf. Augustine's definition of 'proper sin' in 'De Libero Arbitrio', 3.xix.
[32] Kretzmann, CHLMP (1988), p. 661-2. Aquinas, ST, 1a2ae.72-88.
[33] 'Canones et Decreta Dogmatica Concilii Tridentini, Sessio Decimaquarta' (1546), in Schaff, Creeds of Christendom, II, 139-40.
[34] See, John McGowan, The Foundry Budget Opened; or, the Arcanium of Wesleyanism Disclosed (1780), p. 40 ff.; Rowland Hill, 'Imposture Detected, and the Deed Vindicated[...]' (1777), p. 56 ff. See Wesley's response to Hill in Works, X, 408.

have rejected. It is not likely that he borrowed it directly from Catholic moral theology anyway.

3.4. Such Distinctions not Found in Reformers

When one comes to the Reformation period it is obvious Wesley did not get the concept there. Such a distinction was certainly not present in either Luther or Calvin. Luther defined sin as faithlessness. For Calvin, any falling short of the perfect law of love was deemed a sin. More immediate historically to Wesley, Calvin's view was affirmed by the Westminster Confession which concluded that one must sin by necessity, every day in word, thought, and deed, due to 'any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God'.[35] While Wesley agreed with the Westminster Confession on original sin, he disagreed with it when it confirmed that Wesley obviously believed there were some things Calvinists called sins that were little more than conditions of our humanity, things he would have rather called 'infirmities.' However, both Luther and Calvin fully and unequivocally denied any notion of venial or mortal sins.[36]

3.5. Its Anglican Roots: The Moralists

The most likely source of influence on Wesley would have been the Anglican Moralists of the seventeenth century.[37] Albert Outler traced the distinction between voluntary and involuntary sin to a group of Moralists who had a profound influence on Wesley-[38] John Ket-

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[35] 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 431-443. Wesley joined William Parker who criticized the Assembly for advocating a sinning religion in his work, The Late Assembly of Divines Confession of Faith Examined (1651). Note Schaff, Creeds of Christendom (1977) II, 678.

[36] Calvin, Institutes, (II.viii.58), I, 361.

[37] Allison, The Rise of Moralism (1966), p. xii. Another Anglican who made this distinction was Joseph Hall. See More and Cross, Anglicanism (1935), pp. 648-9.

[38] BEW, I, 315. Allison would include in the list of moralists names such as Hooker, Andrewes, Donne, and Davenant, Moralism, p. xi.

tlewell,[39] Samuel Bradford,[40] Hugh Binning,[41] John Weemse.[42] The distinction was also present in Jeremy Taylor, a name curiously omitted by Outler in his list, but included by Allison in his work on moralism. In his work, Unum Necessarium (1655), Taylor used the distinction between mortal and venial sin when he said, 'Sins are not equal, but greater or less in their principle as well as in their event'.[43] Although he made this distinction he also maintained that,

> Every sin is directly against God's law; and therefore is damnable and deadly in the accounts of the divine justice, one as well, though not so grievously, as another. For though sins be differenced by temporal and eternal, but by greater and less in that kind which God hath threatened [...]. Every one according to the quantity and quality of his sin must pay his fine[...]. The smallest offence is a sin, and therefore it is[...]'a transgression of the law,' a violation of that band by which our obedience unites us unto God[...]every sin, though in the smallest instance, is a turning from God and a conversion to the creature.[44]

The volitional aspects of actual sin were clearly present in Taylor's thought, but the cognitive aspects were not as pronounced. Still, there was a distinction made between sins which was explicitly developed in Unum Necessarium and implicitly applied in Holy Living, which was read by Wesley. Combined, these works reveal a concern for defining sin in such a way as to make holy living more attainable in this life.

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[39] John Kettlewell, The Measures of Christian Obedience (1681), Book IV, Chapters 3-4. Green does not reckon Wesley read this until 1733, Young Wesley (1963), p. 299.

[40] Samuel Bradford, The Credibility of the Christian Revelation (1700), p. 445.

[41] Hugh Binning, Fellowship With God (1671), pp. 216-18, which Wesley extracted in vol. 17 of CL.

[42] John Weemse, The Portraiture of God in Man[...] (1627), pp. 300, 326.

[43] Jeremy Taylor, Unum Necessarium, Works, VII, 84, see pp. 83-150. I can find no reference left by Wesley of his ever having read Unum Necessarium. Cf. Claude Fleury, Les Moeurs des Israèlites (1683), which Wesley read while in Georgia (JWJ, I, 198, 201, 202, etc.) and eventually extracted and published as 'The Manners of the Antient Christians' (1749).

[44] Taylor, Unum Necessarium, III.21.a., III.26.d.

It is worth mentioning that Wesley would have also been familiar with Richard Kidder's, A Discourse Concerning Sins of Infirmity and Wilful Sins (1704), although there is no record of Wesley reading it until 1733, which pushes it just beyond the 1725-31 time frame we are specifically studying.[45] It was a mere thirty-three pages long, and was concerned not just with the nature of sin, but also with restitution for sin as an ethical principle of holy living, forming something of a doctrine of penance. In it Kidder pointed out that,

> Two things are required to make a Sin wilful or presumptuous. 1. That it be a Sin against Knowledge[...]. This is the great Aggravation of our Fault, and that which leaves us without Excuse, or any Shadow of it. He that sins against Conscience, is turned Rebel to Heaven, his Guilt increaseth to the greatest Bulk and Stature. 2. That it be committed after Consideration; this makes it a *deliberate* Sin.[46]

In this work one sees once again the cognitive and volitional elements involved in defining actual sin within the context of an explication of a holy living tradition.

3.6. Richard Lucas and John Wesley

Of the Anglican moralists, perhaps it was Richard Lucas who had the greatest influence on Wesley's understanding of actual sin during this period of his development. There is good reason to make a connection between the two. According to Green, Wesley had read Lucas's, Religious Perfection: or, A Third Part of the Enquiry after Happiness (1685) in 1730,[47] just a few months before the exchange of letters with Mary Pendarves and Ann Granville,[48] when his version of Lucas's definition of actual sin first appeared. When he did he

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[45] Green, Young Wesley (1963), p. 299.

[46] Richard Kidder, A Discourse Concerning Sins of Infirmity, and Wilful Sins, with another of Restitution. (1704), p. 18.

[47] Richard Lucas, Religious Perfection: or, A Third Part of the Enquiry after Happiness (1685) (London: 1717, 4th ed.). For Wesley's regard of Lucas see Alexander Knox's remarks in Southey, Life of Wesley (1925), II, 345.

[48] Green, Young Wesley (1963), pp. 129, 131, 139, 294.

would have discovered Lucas struggling with the same issue he was- defining sin in such a way as to make religious perfection possible.

In doing so Lucas concluded that generally speaking, sin was falling short of the law of God, but before a sin was to be considered mortal it had to deliberate, and the law of God had to be known, otherwise it was a venial sin. Lucas consciously drew upon Scholasticism to make the distinction between mortal and venial sins.[49] In making it he said,

> And thus I distinguish Venial from Mortal Sin: Mortal Sin proceeds from the Heart, either Habitually corrupted, or deceived and captived for the time; but Venial Sin results from the Imperfections and Infelicities of our Nature, and our State. Mortal Sin is truly Voluntary and Deliberate in the Rice [sic] and Birth of it, and mischievous and injurious in its Consequence: But Venial sin is very far Indeliberate in its Beginning, and, if not indulged, almost harmless in its Effects: Deficiency is, as it were, the Essence of the one, Malignity of the other; in the one we see more of Frailty, in the other more of Wickedness: in the one something nearly ally'd to Necessity, in the other to Presumption: the one is the Transgression of the Law of Perfection, the other of the Law of Sincerity; the one is repugnant to the Letter, the other to the Design and End of the Law; the one is a Violation of God's Commands, taken in the most favourable Construction, the other a Violation of them in a rigorous one. That this was the notion of St. Jerome, and others, who impugn'd the sinless Perfection of the Pelagians, is very plain.[50]

To Lucas mortal sin was deliberate, the result of malignity, resulting in wickedness, and a presumptuous transgression of the perfect law of God. Venial sin was undeliberate, and relatively harmless if not indulged, and the result of frailty resulting in an infraction of the law of sincerity.

Lucas knew that the presupposition to such a view of sin was a doctrine of revelation. He went on to say,

> First, The Law must be sufficiently revealed. Secondly, The Transgression of it must be

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[49] Lucas, Enquiry (1717), p. 304.
[50] Lucas, Enquiry (1717), p. 312.

> truly Voluntary[...]. And this imports two things: 1. A Knowledge of the Law. 2. A Consent to the Breach of it[...]. From all this now put together 'tis easy to conclude what sort of a Description we are to form of Mortal Sin: 'Tis such a Transgression of the Law of God, as is vicious in its Original, deliberate in its Commission, and Mischievous in its Tendencies or Effects: The Heart is corrupted and misled by some Lust or other, and so consents to the Breach of the Moral Law of God, a Law of Eternal and Immutable Goodness: Or if the Sin consists in the Breach of any Positive Law, it must yet imply in it some Moral Obliquity in the Will, or in the Tendency of the Action, or both. So that Presumptuous, or Mortal sin, call i[t] by what name we will is a *Deliberate Transgression of a known Law of God*, tending to the Dishonour of God, the Injury of our Neighbour, or the Depravation of our Nature.[51]

Lucas's understanding of sin was presupposed by a general and universal revelation of the law of God, then conditioned by recognition of that law, and then a wilful violation of it. He was also confident that defiance of that revelation constituted mortal sin and the depravation of human nature. The cognitive and volitional aspects of actual sin are so pronounced in Lucas one cannot help but see an almost verbatim affinity with Wesley. This understanding of sin, combined with a concern for 'holy living' gave rise to a definition of personal sin which made Christian perfection a possibility.

Once this connection between Wesley's understanding of personal sin and Moralism is made one can see how he used Moralism as a weapon to combat Calvinism. As his career developed Wesley became greatly, and more actively 'anti-Calvinist'. Perhaps one of the reasons Wesley became so insistent on making such a distinction between what he eventually called proper and improper sin was because he saw Calvinism's (more specifically the Westminster Assembly's) definition of sin as the greatest threat to the accessibility of holy living and Christian perfection. We have already seen several

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[51] Lucas, Enquiry, (1717), pp. 327-30 (the emphasis is mine); cf. pp. 297-311.

examples of how Wesley defined actual sin in respect to Christian perfection. In a letter dated 1772 Wesley reaffirmed this career-long distinction based on the cognitive and volitional aspects of sin, saying, 'Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin; and nothing else, if we speak properly.' But he went on to add a barb, saying, 'To strain the matter farther is only to make way for Calvinism.'[52] On one hand, defining sin in this way made the way clear for Christian perfection. But on the other hand, *not* to define sin in this way made the way clear for Calvinism. Wesley was convinced its definition of sin, a definition which was far more encompassing than what Wesley liked, made Calvinism the greatest enemy of Christian perfection.[53] Here, Wesley used Anglican Moralism to combat Calvinism, and defend his doctrine of entire sanctification.

3.7. Wesley's Understanding of 'Sincerity'

Although it proved a useful weapon against Calvinism, there was a part of Moralism which Wesley rejected, a part which was often associated with this definition of sin, and one just seen in Lucas above. He rejected their concept of 'sincerity', which Johnson defined as, 'honesty of intention'.[54] Outler has remarked that 'sincerity' was the 'shibboleth' in the eighteenth latitudinarians.[55] Allison, in his work on moralism, said he believed Edward Fowler was the first to make sincerity a prerequisite to justification.[56] Wesley, however, saw sincerity as merely being the

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[52] JWL, V, 322 (1772).
[53] See, 'Remarks on Mr. Hill's Review' (1772), Works, X, 397.
[54] Samuel Johnson, Dictionary (1755).
[55] Outler, BEW, I, 134-5, note 19. 'Latitudinarianism' had its beginning in the 17th century as an attempt to find common ground between the Anglicans, the Presbyterians, and Dissenters. Life and piety were stressed more than belief and reasoning.
[56] Allision, The Rise of Moralism (1966), p. 144, cf. Edward Fowler, The Design of Christianity (1671).

hallmark of an 'almost Christian',[57] clearly denying Fowler's teaching that it was a prerequisite to justification by faith.[58] Neither did sincerity prove one's justification to Wesley, which many assumed would be revealed by self-examination. Wesley believed that the act of examining one's self was a search for a state of faith, not for a sincere heart.[59] On this basis he also refuted Thomas Sherlock's notion of the 'consciousness of our sincerity' was to be understood as a type of assurance.[60] Wesley's concept of assurance was primarily based on a 'witness of the Spirit'. He did have a concept of sincerity, which he more specifically called 'Godly sincerity' as referred to in 2 Corinthians 1.12. Wesley thought Godly sincerity consisted of being without 'tincture of guile, dissimulation, or disguise', in short a sincerity which was without sin.[61] He applied this exegesis in his sermon, 'The Witness of Our Own Spirit', and stated sincerity was, 'actually hitting the mark which we aim at by simplicity'. Simplicity was having a single eye, and the intent to

> glorify God in all that one does. Accordingly it implies[...]that all our actions flow on in an even stream, uniformly subservient to this great end; and that in our whole lives we are moving straight toward God, and that continually- walking steadily on in the highway of holiness, in the paths of justice, mercy, and truth.
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> '13. This sincerity is termed by the Apostle 'godly sincerity', or the sincerity of God[...]to prevent our mistaking or confounding it with the sincerity of the heathens (for they had also a kind of sincerity among them, for which they professed no small veneration); likewise to denote the object and end of this, as of every Christian virtue; seeing whatever

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[57] 'The Almost Christian' (1741), BEW, I, 134-6.

[58] 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 216.

[59] 'The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption' (1746), BEW, I, 263-4.

[60] See, Thomas Sherlock, 'Discourse VIII', in, Several Discourses Preached at the Temple Church (1754, 2nd ed.), pp. 227-49. See 'The Witness of the Spirit, II' (1767), BEW, I, 288 note 11.

[61] ENNT (1755), 2 Corinthians 1.12.

> does not ultimately tend to God sinks among 'the beggarly elements of the world'.[82]

For Wesley, Godly sincerity was something completely different from heathen sincerity. Godly sincerity was the product of holy living, not its presupposition as was assumed by many Moralists. Sincerity never figured into Wesley's understanding of sin, as he definition of sin might imply, but it did his understanding of holiness.

3.8. Summary of Development

Now that Wesley's understanding of personal sin has been developed chronologically, we may isolate three essential elements. First, there was for Wesley sin properly so called, which consisted of a cognitive element. One must know something is a sin before it can be a sin, which presupposed some sort of revelation of the moral law. Second, sin properly so called also consisted of a volitional element. One must voluntarily break the known law of God before it can be a sin, which excluded any notion of determinism. Proper sin was mortal sin for Wesley. This was the sin that Christians should avoid because it estranged one from God. Deliberate sin severs the saving relationship. Third, from these two elements there arose another distinction which Wesley called infirmities, which he eventually came to call 'sin improperly so called', or venial sin. This sin in and of itself did not break the saving relationship because it did not involve wilful defiance of God's law, known or unknown. These are the involuntary transgressions which arise from the nature of our human existence, which have been conditioned by the fall, or from a lack of choice. Each of these aspects will be looked at in more detail below.

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[82] 'The Witness of Our Own Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 306-8; cf. 'An Israelite Indeed' (1785), BEW, III, 286.

4. A Systematic Analysis- Sin Properly, Improperly So Called

Having now looked at the historical development and isolated its three elements it is now appropriate to consider a more systematic analysis of actual sin. To conduct the analysis, proper sin will be considered first, with its cognitive and volitional aspects, followed by improper sin.

4.1. Sin Properly So Called- The Cognitive Aspect

Because of the cognitive element involved in his understanding of sin properly so called, there must be by sin's very definition something of an epistemology of sin. Accordingly, this epistemology must be based upon Scripture, reason, or experience. The are five aspects of this which merit discussion at this point.

First of all, this definition was largely presupposed by the denial of innate knowledge. We are born with no knowledge of anything, no knowledge of God, and no knowledge of God's moral law. We are all born ignorant atheists, with no knowledge of what sin is, or is not. This atheism, and amorality is due to the deprivation of the moral image of God. Because we are born blank slates there is but one way we may gain knowledge, that is through experience. For Wesley, there were two fundamental sources of experience. They were sensation and revelation, which in turn produced two types of experience, namely sensory and religious. Consequently, it is by experience that one becomes aware of sin.

Secondly, this definition of sin properly so called was largely based upon a basic tenet of empiricism in which cognition equaled consciousness. No one can be cognizant of something and not be aware of it. When applied to the definition of actual sin, this means we must have a cognitive awareness of sin through either the experiences of sensation or revelation. If one experiences a knowledge of sin one must have an awareness of that knowledge.

Thirdly, because cognition equals consciousness, the empirical nature of the cognitive aspect of proper sin locates personal sin in the nature of personality. By this definition what becomes sin is ultimately determined by one's experience, either by way of sensation or revelation. The hazard of appending the definition of sin completely to experience is that it may be too easily reduced to subjective relativism, to recall even the words of Mrs. Wesley, 'that thing is sin to you'. This has always been a potential point of misunderstanding and abuse where Wesley's definition of actual sin is concerned.

Fourthly, this definition of personal sin is consequently located more in personality, and not in the constitutive nature of personhood, which was for Wesley, the body/soul duality. Here is a contradiction between his concept of personhood, and the cognitive aspect of his doctrine of sin. It will be remembered that Wesley separated personhood and personality. As important as personality is to personhood, it is not what made up the constitutive parts of personhood. The constitutive parts of personhood consisted of a body/-soul duality (in which the soul serves as the receptacle of the image of God) which existed objectively before God. As such, the soul provided the continuity of personhood, which exists objectively before God. This was Wesley's attempt to deny the validity of Locke's assertion that consciousness makes identity. According to Wesley's concept of personhood it is this objective existence before God which determines not just personal identity, but culpability of sin as well. In reacting to Locke, Wesley had a problem with making the culpability of sin contingent upon consciousness. In his own definition of actual sin, Wesley had no qualms about it. According to this statement there is culpability irrespective of consciousness, which implies the possibility of sinning without cognition, especially where the unregenerate are concerned. While consciousness may not have constituted personal identity where his concept of personhood was concerned, consciousness

and cognition of sin was a constitutive element where his understanding of sin was concerned. Because he divided personhood from personality, this cognitive and volitional aspect of actual sin is developed as a part of his understanding of personality. It will be later shown how this consciousness of sin constituted conscience for Wesley. This would also seem to imply that not only is creation ontologically and morally neutral, but acts are also, at least until one becomes conscious of the sinfulness of those acts, resulting in conscience. This is not something Wesley would have wanted to imply. The problem is reconciling Wesley's one might anachronistically term psychology, and its concept of personhood with his hamartiology.

When taken at its worst, the definition of sin properly so called, with its cognitive aspect would seem to indicate that the law of God does not exist as objective knowledge which has a reality independent of the knower.[63] That is to say, the law is not real until realized. This definition is indeed at its worst when it stands isolated from the order of salvation. While it stands on its own within the context of an empirical epistemology in which innate knowledge is denied, the single most important issue then becomes how does one become cognizant, or aware, of the law of God, so that one may become cognizant or aware of sin? To what extent may one remain blissfully ignorant of God's law? Are not some of our vilest offenses done as acts of ignorance? This is a valid point raised by Greaves, who preferred to define sin as ignorance, in his critique of Wesley's doctrine of sin.[64]

This introduces the fifth aspect of his definition of sin properly so called. This definition of actual sin is strongly dependent on a doctrine of general, or universal revelation of the moral law. Unfortunately, the contingency of universal revelation is not provided by his definition of sin. It is only assumed by it.

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[63] See, Flew, Dictionary of Philosophy (1979), p. 303.
[64] Greaves, The Meaning of Sin (1956), p. 63.

For Lucas, revelation was an explicitly stated presupposition to the doctrine of sin. For Wesley, this general, or universal revelation of the moral law is eventually provided by prevenient grace, the first step in the order of salvation. This prevenient grace must be an essential part of any Wesleyan doctrine of sin, and concept of personality. While revelation is not a constitutive part of personhood, which consists of the body/soul duality, it is a constitutive part of human personality. It must be universally infused into human consciousness, without it being innate knowledge. Perhaps the crucial problem in putting all of this together is not Wesley's need for a doctrine of universal revelation, or the cognitive aspect of his understanding of actual sin, but accounting for a compulsory experience of the cognitive aspects of revelation. To say there is universal revelation through prevenient grace is one thing, but to say there is a universal consciousness of that revelation is something altogether different, and can only be verified, or invalidated through an empirical study of anthropology, which Wesley more or less attempted to do in the first section of his Doctrine of Original Sin.

It is this revelation of the moral law which we have already seen as a part of the moral image of God, which constituted Adam's original righteousness. But the moral image, and the moral law with it, was lost in the fall. What we will see later is how prevenient grace re-inscribed a certain measure of knowledge of the moral law onto the soul of each individual person as an act of God's universal prevenient grace. In this respect, prevenient grace was concomitant with universal revelation for Wesley, which can be supplied only by a systematic formulation of Wesley's thought, and not through historical reconstruction only. If the cognitive aspect of Wesley's understanding of actual sin is to have any relevance or meaning the problem of consciousness, conscience, and revelation must be resolved. Hopefully, it will be shown how these problems are resolved in the next chapter on the order of salvation.

4.2. Sin Properly So Called- The Volitional Aspect

The cognitive aspect of sin properly so called presents only one set of problems. The volitional aspect presents another. It is appropriate that the cognitive aspect be discussed first because it must presuppose the volitional aspect. One cannot wilfully violate the law of God unless one first knows the will of God. Even so, volition was the most significant aspect of actual sin. Going back to Wesley's definition of sin improperly so called, he defined it as 'an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown'.[65] In view of that he could say that God,

> will punish no man for doing anything which he could not possibly avoid; neither for omitting anything which he could not possibly do.[66]

Even if one knows God's law, but unwillingly has to break God's law, that act is not a sin. The justice of God would not permit punishment for the unavoidable sins of commission or omission. In the strictest, and most literal sense of the word, the volitional aspect of actual sin defended the justice of God, or 'theos dikei'.

He gave at least one example of a curious, if not provocative, hypothetical situation which he thought illustrated the point of volition. He was talking about the sin of schism when we said,

> Suppose you could not remain in the Church of England without doing something which the Word of God forbids, or omitting something which the Word of God positively commands; if this were the case (but blessed be God it is not) you ought to separate from the Church of England. I will make the case my own. I am now, and have been from my youth, a member and a minister of the Church of England. And I have no desire nor design to separate from it till my soul separates from my body. Yet if I was not permitted to remain therein without omitting what God requires me to do, it would then become meet, and right, and my bounden duty to separate from it without delay. To be more particular. I know God has committed to

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[65] Works, XI, 396.
[66] 'Thoughts upon God's Sovereignty' (1777), Works, X, 363.

> me a dispensation of the gospel. Yea, and my own salvation depends upon preaching it: 'Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel.' If then I could not remain in the Church without omitting this, without desisting from preaching the gospel, I should be under a necessity of separating from it, or losing my own soul.[67]

It seems as though Wesley were preparing his own defense for separation with the Church of England on the grounds of 'sin improperly so called'. If this situation were to happen the course of action Wesley was prepared to take was a course of action he would unwillingly take. The aspect of sin improperly so called is what gave Wesley's understanding of actual sin something of a quality of moralism.

Wesley saw the application of justice as a test case of God's sovereignty. While the cognitive aspect of this definition of actual sin must presuppose the volitional aspect, both conditions must be satisfied before something may be properly called sin. Divine justice demands that this be so.

Standing on its own, the volitional aspect seems frightfully Pelagian. The reason is probably that Wesley differed from Luther and Calvin in that he included liberty as a part of his understanding of the image of God, and also as a part of prevenient grace. Luther was only willing to speak about the 'bondage of the will', and understood this as an important consequence of original sin. While Wesley's understanding is that actual sin springs forth from original sin, his definition of actual sin was not adopted with original sin in mind. This volitional, and moralistic aspect of actual sin was not so much intended to reinforce original sin as much as it was to make Christian perfection a possibility in this lifetime. This has a tendency to appear to weaken Wesley's doctrine of original sin, giving it what may appear to some as a semi-Pelagian characteristic.

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[67] 'On Schism' (1786), BEW, III, 67.

This makes it all the more important that the volitional aspect of actual sin be understood with original sin as a fundamental presupposition. His doctrine of original sin with its strong language of depravity concluded we are born sinners. Therefore, we sin because we are sinners. Although actual sin is defined not so much by what one is, but by what one does, what one does is influenced by what one is. We wilfully sin because we are sinners by nature and by birth. In view of this there are even more questions which must be asked. To what extent is this freedom to sin, or not to sin granted to the unregenerate? Are the works of the unregenerate nothing more than 'splendid sins'? To what extent is this freedom to sin or not to sin granted to the regenerate?

Wesley's understanding of the volitional and cognitive aspects of sin formed a radical departure from Luther's understanding of sin as unbelief, and Calvin's understanding of sin as any falling short of the law.[68] For Wesley, sin did involve unbelief, and it also involved a falling short of the law so far as one was aware of the law, but these aspects did not help to define sin. They only helped to describe the act of sinning, or the 'ordo peccare'. For the believer, the 'ordo peccare' consisted of,

> the unquestionable progress from grace to sin. Thus it goes on, from step to step. (1). The divine seed of loving, conquering faith remains in him that is 'born of God'. 'He keepeth himself', by the grace of God, and 'cannot commit' sin; (2). A temptation arises, whether from the world, the flesh, or the devil, it matters not; (3). The Spirit of God gives him warning that sin is near, and bids him more abundantly watch unto prayer; (4). He gives way in some degree to the temptation, which now begins to grow pleasing to him; (5). The Holy Spirit is grieved; his faith is weakened, and his love of God grows cold; (6). The Spirit reproves him more sharply, and saith, 'This is the way; walk thou in it.' (7). He turns away from the painful voice of God and listens to the pleasing voice of the

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[68] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 79, where Wesley denies that all transgression of the law is sin.

> tempter; (8). Evil desire begins and spreads in his soul, till faith and love vanish away; (9). He is then capable of committing outward in, the power of the Lord being departed from him.[69]

In the 'ordo peccare' the Spirit plays a significant part in cognitive aspects, making the volition possible. The Spirit's part in prevenient grace will be seen below.

4.3. Sin Improperly So Called

Those issues relate mostly to the soul, and consequently to metaphysics, largely because cognition and volition were acts of the soul. Infirmities relate mostly to the body, and the most observable consequences of original sin. Wesley was never quite certain as to how to resolve the relationship between the cognitive and volitional aspects of sin with the concept of body, the other constitutive part of the duality of personhood. To what extent is the body corrupt? Is corruption the same as sinful?

Wesley was not keen to identify the body with the New Testament pejorative meaning for 'flesh' (or sarx). For Wesley, '*Flesh* sometimes signifies corrupt nature; sometimes, the body, sometimes[...]the whole man.'[70] By corrupt nature he meant, among other things, being 'carnally minded', 'in a state of nature', 'before we believed in Christ', our 'corrupt' and 'evil' 'nature' and 'passions'.[71] He did not mean by the concept what others might call the 'sinful body'.

> 'But surely we cannot be saved from sin while we dwell in a *sinful body*.' A 'sinful body'? I pray, observe how deeply ambiguous, how equivocal, this expression is! But there is no authority for it in Scripture: the word 'sinful body' is never found there. And as it is totally unscriptural, so it is palpably absurd. For no *body*, or matter of any kind,

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[69] 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748) BEW, I, 438-40.
[70] ENNT (1755), John 1.14.
[71] ENNT (1755), Romans 7.5, 25; Galatians 5.16, 17, etc.

> be *sinful*: spirits alone are capable of sin. [...]Only the soul can be seat of sin.[72]

There was what appeared to be a disjunction between the body and the soul where sin was concerned. Corruption was seen by Wesley as the same thing as sin. Although he extracted a prayer which instructed Christians to pray for forgiveness of, 'The sins of our souls *and* the sins of our bodies', such a prayer was not consistent with his views on sin and the body.[73] Only the soul, which was the subject of cognition and perception, volition and free will, could be ultimately responsible for sin, in as much as evil and sin were defined as choosing not to do God's will. The body was ontologically and morally neutral for Wesley, a concept suggested by his mother in the letter above, and reaffirmed by his own understanding of creation and createdness. To say otherwise would have jeopardized Incarnation theology. When Christ became flesh, or a whole person, he 'united himself to our miserable nature, with all its innocent infirmities.'[74] To speak of infirmities was the way in which Wesley discussed the ontological neutrality of the body, all of which was the consequence of his aesthetic view of creation, and free-will account of evil.

Nonetheless, Wesley was able to talk about what Augustine referred to as the 'triplex concupiscentia', a concept which was derived from exegesis of 1 John 2.15-16. In his comments on 1 John 2.16 in his, ENNT Wesley wrote,

> *The desire of the flesh*- Of the pleasure of the outward senses, whether of the taste, smell, or touch. *The desire of the eye*- Of the pleasures of imagination, to which the eye chiefly is subservient; of that internal sense whereby we relish whatever is grand, new, or beautiful. *The pride of life*- All that pomp in clothes, houses, furniture, equipage, manner of living, which generally procure honour from the bulk of mankind, and so

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[72] 'On Perfection' (1784) BEW, III, 79-80. See also, 'The First-fruits of the Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 240 for similar view.

[73] Gill, Wesley's Prayers (1951), p. 96.

[74] ENNT (1755), John 1.14.

> gratify pride and vanity. It therefore directly includes the desire of praise, and, remotely, covetousness. All these desires are not from God, but from the prince of this world.[75]

The problem was that the soul had to live in a material world, which sometimes led to the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life. The sermons of Wesley are scattered with references to the 'triplex concupiscentia',[76] which he understood to be a part of original sin.[77]

For Augustine, the 'triplex concupiscentia' consisted of the three kinds of 'vice', which he called pleasure, pride, and curiosity. He also saw a correspondence between them and the temptations of Christ-food (lust of flesh), the kingdoms of the world (pride), and leaping from the temple (curiosity).[78] From these three vices, or temptations, all sins spring. This was elaborated upon in, Confessions.[79] However, the difference between Augustine and Wesley is that Augustine used the central idea concupiscence to help explain original sin, a move Wesley took pains to avoid.[80] Wesley did not see original sin as the result of concupiscence, but concupiscence as the result of original sin, saying,

> From this evil fountain [inbred corruption] flow forth the bitter streams of vanity, thirst of praise, ambition, covetousness, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life.[81]

Wesley did, however, use concupiscence, or more specifically the 'triplex concupiscentia', to account for actual sin. This will be an important distinction and divergence from the Augustinian tradition for Wesley,

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[75] ENNT (1755), 1 John 2.16.
[76] Outler's index to the Sermons lists 41 references.
[77] 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 179-82.
[78] Augustine, On the Psalms, VIII.13.
[79] Augustine, Confessions, X.xxx.41; X.xxxiii.49-xxix.64. Also, see On Patience, §14-16.
[80] Augustine, 'On Original Sin', §§38-45; 'On Marriage and Concupiscence', chs. 17-28; 'Sermons on the New-Testament Lessons', LXII.6.
[81] 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 226.

especially where his doctrine of Christian perfection is concerned. It stands to reason if concupiscence is caused by original sin, and if original sin can be dealt with at the root by entire sanctification, then so may concupiscence.

His exegesis of 1 John 2.16 is applied throughout the sermons. For example,

> These idols, these rivals of God, are innumerable: but they may be nearly reduced to three parts. First, objects of sense, such as gratify one or more of our outward senses. These excite the first kind of 'love of the world', which St. John terms 'the desire of the flesh'. Secondly, objects of the imagination, things that gratify our fancy, by grandeur, beauty, or novelty. All these make us fair promises of happiness, and thereby prevent our seeking it in God. This the Apostle terms, 'the desire of the eyes'; whereby chiefly the imagination is gratified. They are, thirdly, what St. John calls 'the pride of life'. He seems to mean honour, wealth, and whatever directly tends to engender pride.[82]

Sensory perception contributed greatly to provide the soul with a vast of array of temptations, leading Wesley to conclude, 'how numberless must the temptations be which will beset every man, more or less, sooner or later, while he dwells in this corruptible body!'[83] Because of the relationship between the body and soul, which is a union of the metaphysical with the material, one must be careful about what one is furnishing the soul with through the senses. It can lead to idolatry. And,

> the first species of this idolatry is what St. John terms 'the desire of the flesh'[...]this expression equally refers to all the outward senses. It means the seeking happiness in the gratification of any or all of the external senses; although more particularly of the three lower senses, tasting, smelling, and feeling.[84]

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[82] 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 65.

[83] 'On Temptation' (1786), BEW, III, 159-60; cf. 'On Patience' (1784), BEW, III, 170.

[84] 'Spiritual Idolatry' (1781), BEW, III, 105-6.

But it also can lead to a cynical view of aesthetics, beauty, and even of innovation.

> We may farther suppose him to have gained all that gratifies 'the desire of the eyes'; whatever (by means of the eye chiefly) conveys any pleasure to the imagination. The pleasures of imagination arise from three sources: grandeur, beauty, and novelty.[...] For all this is manifestly implied in a man's gaining the whole world.[85]

It must be pointed out, however, that in his essay, 'Thoughts upon Taste' Wesley did adopt aesthetics to a religious use, by which aesthetic worth is measured by whether or not end of it all is 'the "pleasing all men for their good unto edification."'[86] Otherwise, Wesley was hesitant to develop a positive view of aesthetics.

It is ironic that while Wesley did not find the cause of sin in what we called his aesthetic theme of creation, he does find a reason to see a cause for sin in an aesthetic view of the beautiful. Perhaps the difference is things created by God speak of Divine glory, while things created by humans speak of human glory. The difference is what could also been seen as Creator creating creatures, who participated in a fallen nature through the loss of the image of God, and the fallen creatures creating creatures which become idols.[87] This made Wesley skeptical of beauty, because of its appeal to the 'triplex concupiscentia'.

The aesthetics of human made objects also became

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[85] 'The Important Question' (1775), BEW, III, 183-4. See also, 'An Israelite Indeed' (1785), BEW, III, 282-3; 'On Riches' (1788), BEW, III, 524-5; and his dismissive attitude towards 'European arts' in 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1743), BEW, XI, 61.

[86] 'Thoughts on Taste', AM, 3 (1780), 662, in Works, XIII, 470, which was provoked by Alexander Gerard, 'Essay on Taste'. See, Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast (1989), p. 352.

[87] It is at this point that a Wesleyan theory of aesthetics could possibly (in fact needs to) be developed, which is in-keeping with what eventually became Wesley's holiness ethic. It has become particularly tragic that in many subsequent Wesleyan traditions the nature of the holiness ethic has excluded any competent theology of aesthetics.

the trappings of wealth.[88] In response to the increasing wealth of the Methodists, Wesley felt compelled to say,

> If any of you have now twice, thrice, or four times as much substance as when you first saw my face, faithfully examine yourselves, and see if you do not set your hearts, if not directly on money or riches themselves, yet on some of the things that are purchasable thereby, which comes to the same thing. All those the Apostle John includes under that general name, 'the world'; and the desire of them, or to seek happiness in them, under that form, 'the love the world'. This he divides into three branches, 'the desire of the flesh', 'the desire of the eyes', and 'the pride of life'. Fairly examine yourselves with regard to these. [...]I am afraid your own heart condemns you. You are not clear in this matter.[89]

To Wesley love of 'Mammon' and love of the world (which consisted of desire of the flesh, desire of the eye, and pride of life) simultaneous in consequence.

Wesley was fearful that without the restraint of self-denial sensation could lead to sensuality.[90] While the body might well have been ontologically neutral for Wesley, it was nonetheless the medium by which the soul was subjected to gross temptations. These temptations were always a threat as long as the soul was in body. Here is precisely where Susanna Wesley's ascetic rule was applied to be applied, in an effort to combat the 'triplex concupiscentia'.

4.4. Summary

The subject of personal sin was a complicated issue for Wesley. The source of many of the complications is in reconciling Wesley's concept of personhood, hamartiology, and soteriology. This created problems where the method of their discussion is concerned. Because Wesley developed an interdependent relationship between

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[88] 'The Danger of Riches' (1781), BEW, III, 228-46.

[89] 'The Danger of Increasing Riches' (1790), BEW, IV, 183; cf. 'The Use of Money' (1760), BEW, II, 263-80; 'Thoughts upon Methodism', AM 10(1787), 100-02, 155-56, in BEW, IX, 527-30.

[90] 'Self-denial' (1760), BEW, II, 238-50.

the issue of personal sin and original sin, and even between original sin and holy living, all these distinctions in personal sin must be discussed in respect to the order of salvation. It is within the order of salvation that Wesley seeks to reconcile his psychology, hamartiology, and soteriology. It has by now become widely accepted that the order of salvation is the key to understanding the 'inner consistency' to Wesley's sermons, and indeed the remainder of his thought.[91] It is within this framework many of the issues of systematic theology are brought to light.[92] It is certainly within this framework, more specifically in its relation to Christian perfection, that Wesley's understanding of personal sin actually takes place, and the person experiences 'therapy of the soul'. In the next chapter we shall place all these within the structure of the order of salvation to try and see them resolved.

[91] BEW, I, 13.
[92] See Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1989), p. 137.

Chapter Five
Wesley's Order of Salvation: The Re-Inscription of the Image of God

1. Introduction

From the beginning it has been argued that Wesley's doctrine of sin must be set in a theological context to be properly understood. It has been proposed that the best way to understand that context is by recovering certain doctrines from Wesley's Christian system. An important concept to his Christian system is the concept of eternal reason, which emerged in chapter one. In chapter two we saw that Wesley defined evil as not obeying God, or as a deviation from the eternal reason, or the will of God. The initial deviation from eternal reason was demonstrated by angelic disobedience which led to a heavenly revolt, which in turn led to a division in the chain of being, creating a cosmological dualism between creatures who share in a right relationship with God and those who do not. This revolt was not accounted for ontologically, but morally, that is to say by way of free-will. In chapter three original sin was seen as participation by the human race in that deviation from the eternal reason. In chapter four we saw how actual sin is the individual's wilful participation in transgressing God's law, which was for Wesley, essentially the same as eternal reason. Among other things, this chapter will demonstrate that for Wesley the goal of grace is for the believer to have the mind that was in Christ, which in itself was the image of eternal reason.[1] To have the mind of Christ one must be renewed in the image of God.

The theological context of the doctrine of sin extends to the doctrine of salvation for two reasons first, in many respects original sin determined the content and goal of salvation, which is Christ restoring what we lost in Adam through original sin. What we lost in Adam was the moral image of God, while the natural and political images were marred. Second, because Wesley's understanding of actual sin was developed not in conjunction with his doctrine of original sin, but in

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[1] There are no less than 51 references to 'the mind of Christ' as mentioned in Phil. 2.5. For a listing see BEW, IV, 679.

conjunction with his concern for holy living. Actual sin cannot be rightly understood unless it is placed within the context of the order of salvation. As the order of salvation is discussed, the subtleties of actual sin will start to emerge. For Wesley, relations between God and humankind were restored, and the image of God is renewed through prevenient, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying grace. The experience of God's grace becomes the structure of Wesley's order of salvation.

This chapter will consist of two major sections, one on the nature of Wesley's order of salvation, and another on the order of salvation itself.

2. The Nature of Wesley's Order of Salvation

This section will briefly discuss some of the characteristics of Wesley's order of salvation, beginning with its historical and biblical precedents.

2.1. It has Historical and Biblical Precedence

The order of salvation had a long history before Wesley's use of it. For example, it occupied a significant place in the thoughts of Germans Jacob Spener,[2] and David Hollaz;[3] the Puritan theology of Peter Martyr, Martin Bucer, John Bradford, Richard Baxter, John Owen;[4] and the Scottish theologian, Thomas Boston.[5] Outler was convinced that origins of influence on Wesley were more primitive than those, saying it was derived from Irenaeus's doctrine of the recapitulatory work of Christ as the ground of salvation.[6] The doctrine of

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[2] Erb, Pietists (1983), p. 6; cf. Schmid, Doctrinal Theology (1876), pp. 407-99.

[3] Schwöbel, God: Action and Revelation (1992), pp. 127-31.

[4] Wallace, Puritans and Predestination (1982). Wesley would have been familiar with at least Baxter, and Owen.

[5] Thomas Boston, Human Nature in its Fourfold State (1720). Wesley adapted Boston's fourfold state to a threefold state: 'natural' (when one neither fears nor loves God), 'legal' (when one fears God), and 'evangelical' (when one loves God) as used in 'The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption' (1746), BEW, I, 249-66; cf. Augustine, Enchiridion, XXXI.117-19; Outler, BEW, I, 248.

[6] BEW, I, 75.

recapitulation certainly indicated the grounding of the order of salvation in the work of Christ. However, Wesley's order of salvation is not just about the work of Christ, it is about the believer's experience of the work of Christ.

Even so, Wesley developed the order of salvation not because it was historical, but because he thought it was biblical. To him, the order of salvation was 'The Scripture Way of Salvation', thinking the Christian religion should be taken 'in its native form, just as it is described in the oracles of God'.[7]

2.2. Experience is the Interface between Dogmatics and Ethics

Although the doctrine did have a Biblical and historical precedence, Wesley's order of salvation was to be experienced, not just believed. Empiricism's reduction of experience into a 'subjective' category of thought carried with it the potential of reducing the order of salvation to that of a mere 'phenomenon of religion'. Wesley was aware of the excessiveness of enthusiasts- such as the French prophets which was often caused by the subjective nature of experience.[8] As a 'phenomenon of religion', empirical observation could have established the order of salvation as nothing more than a 'variety of religious experiences'.[9] On this basis modern critics of the order of salvation have said it reduces the doctrine of salvation and the effects of God's grace to a psychological description of a religious phenomenon.[10]

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[7] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 155-6.

[8] BEW, XIX, 33, 72-3, where he encountered 'French prophets'; cf. 'A Second Letter To the Author of the Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compar'd' (1751), BEW, XI, 399-429, p. 399. See, George Lavington, 'The enthusiasm of Methodists and papists compar'd', Parts I, II (1749), and III (1751); and, 'The Bishop of Exeter's answer to Mr. J. Wesley's late letter to his Lordship' (1752).

[9] James, The Varieties of Religious Experience (1982); cf. Cushman, Experimental Divinity (1989), p. 54.

[10] Schwöbel, God: Action and Revelation (1992), pp. 126-27 has cited as 'a particular drastic example of this criticism', Martin Rade's, Glaubenslehre, Zweiter Band, Drittes Buch: "Vom Geist", (1927).

Schwöbel's own research into the order of salvation has brought him to more positive conclusions regarding the part the order of salvation can play in systematic theology. He has suggested that the order of salvation reconstructs personal experience from the perspective and orientation of faith, and also reconstructs the relationship between divine and human action as it is disclosed in revelation. In this way personal experience becomes the 'interface between dogmatics and ethics' which enables the rational aspect of systematic theology to satisfy the need to be practical. On this basis the order of salvation can provide systematic theology with an important practical orientation in respect to both Christian ethics, and the *praxis* of the church.[11]

If one applies Schwöbel's analysis of the order of salvation specifically to Wesley's order of salvation it can be seen how Wesley's experimental religion becomes the interface between dogmatics and ethics, between orthodoxy and orthopraxy. The experimental aspect of the order of salvation meant Wesley strongly believed that the Christian's experience of God's grace resulted in a radical transformation of the believer as the direct consequence of the new life. In this way his theology, and more specifically his doctrine of salvation, was never divorced from ethics and other practical issues, giving Wesley's theology the holistic quality spoken of in the introduction.[12]

2.3. It is Teleological in Nature

The order of salvation draws from the holistic experience of Christian pilgrimage, which consists of 'the several stages of the Christian course, the steps which a Christian successively takes in his journey to the promised land[...]',[13] a pilgrimage which is in

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[11] Schwöbel, God: Revelation and Action, pp. 130-31, 138-39.

[12] BEW, XI, 16.

[13] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 475, and note 470; cf. Wesley's 'Preface' to Sermons on Several Occasions (1746), BEW, (continued...)

itself teleological, or goal orientated, in nature. Wesley's order of salvation moves towards a goal, or end- the 'therapy of the soul',[14] in which the believer has the mind which was in Christ through the renewal of the image of God in the soul of human persons. In this respect his soteriology is not archaeological, but teleological, in-as-much-as the goal is Christ-likeness and Christian perfection, not Adam-likeness and Adamic perfection.[15] In Wesley's sermons there was always an emphasis on growth and progression leading to renewal in the image of God, through having the mind which was in Christ.[16] What enabled this growth in grace was the notion that grace increases the capacity to receive more grace, a thought found in Gregory of Nyssa's receptacle imagery.[17] By incorporating the order of salvation into the framework of the Christian system, the experiential is incorporated with the rational, giving Christian theology a teleological and dynamic quality.

2.4. It is Attained by Faith

The way one progresses in pilgrimage and attains the goal of salvation- or renewal in the image of God and the mind of Christ- is by faith. Faith alone is able to make us whole, 'which is the one medicine given under heaven to heal' our sin sick souls.[18] 'In asserting salvation by faith,' Wesley wrote,

> we mean this: (1.) that pardon (salvation begun) is received by faith producing works. (2.) That holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love. (3.) That heaven

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[13](...continued)
I, 105-06; cf. 'Sermon on the Mount, XI' (1750), BEW, I, 668-69; 'Sermon on the Mount, XII' (1750), BEW, I, 677.

[14] DOS, Works, IX, 194.

[15] There is, however, one archeological reference in 'On Mourning for the Dead' (1727), BEW, IV, 239.

[16] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766/77), Works, XI, 426. Although first published in 1766, it is the revised edition of 1777 that is actually published in the Works.

[17] See Harrison, 'Receptacle Imagery in St. Gregory of Nyssa's Anthropology', SP, XXII, 23-27; also Gregory of Nyssa, 'On the Soul and the Resurrection'.

[18] "The Circumcision of the Heart" (1733), BEW, I, 404.

> (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith.[19]

Wesley's order of salvation before 1738 would have been more Catholic, in which works, or sanctification, preceded justification. However, 1738 saw what by now has been commonly accepted as Wesley's 'evangelical', or 'Protestant' conversion,[20] which resulted in an ordering of Wesley's order of salvation, with justification by faith taking the place of prominence.[21] The goal of both the Catholic and Protestant order of salvation remained the same, namely the re-inscription of the image of God. The most significant change was faith being how one obtained that end. He thought the doctrine of justification by faith was 'all the Reformed Churches''[22] understanding of the way of salvation, a doctrine he thought was supported by the Anglican articles of religion,[23] but abandoned by many in the Church of England and the University of Oxford.[24] Although, after 1770 one sees in Wesley's sermons an emphasis on works. This was an emphasis resulting from the antinomian controversy Wesley was engaged in, and

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[19] 'Minutes of some late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 290.

[20] See Rattenbury, Conversion of the Wesleys (1938). I am aware of the differing opinions as to the significance of Aldersgate, especially to the later period of Wesley's life. See, Outler, 'Towards a Re-Appraisal of John Wesley as a Theologian', The Perkins School of Theology Journal 14(1961), 8, who discounts the importance of Aldersgate; and cf. Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1989), p. 55-64, who argues for its significance. Lawson has said, 'Wesley's evangelical experience was the conversion of a moralist, which left him a moralist still, though now a victorious moralist', John Lawson, 'The Conversion of the Wesleys' (1987), p. 30. Cf. David L. Cubie, 'Placing Aldersgate in John Wesley's Order of Salvation', WTJ, 24(1989), 32-53, who equates Aldersgate to Wesley's personal Pentecost.

[21] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 177-78, where Wesley admitted that from 1725-28, '[...]I was utterly ignorant of the nature and condition of *justification*. Sometimes I confounded it with sanctification-particularly when I was in Georgia'; cf. 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), in Works, VIII, 290; cf. 'Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained' (1746), BEW, IX, 222-23.

[22] 'Hypocrisy in Oxford' (1741), BEW, V, 395.

[23] 'On God's Vineyard' (1787), BEW, III, 505, where he also says, 'Who has wrote more ably than Martin Luther on justification by faith alone? And who was more ignorant of the doctrine of sanctification, or more confused in his conceptions of it?'

[24] 'Hypocrisy in Oxford' (1741), BEW, IV, 395-96.

not a fundamental theological shift away from the doctrine of salvation by faith.[25] In 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' he had said, 'The end is, in one word, salvation: the means to attain it, faith' which became Wesley's guiding principle after 1738.[26]

2.5. It is Existential in Nature

By faith Wesley thought the Christian could be renewed in the moral image of God and the mind of Christ in this life time. This gave his order of salvation a preponderate existential nature. He was convinced that the words, 'Ye *are* saved' meant salvation here and now, not something received only in the distant future.[27] In this respect 'now' was an important word in Wesley's order of salvation. The sinner can be justified by faith 'now'. The believer can be sanctified by faith 'now'. The sanctified can be freed from sin 'now'. Wesley sought to place as much of salvation as possible on this side of death. However, this 'now-ness' created a dialectical tension between the existential and eschatological aspects of salvation, that is between what is attainable here, and what is attainable only after the resurrection, all of which is highlighted by the question, 'How much of the image of God can be restored in a person now?' Only an investigation into the order of salvation itself will provide the answer.

2.6. It is Trinitarian in Orientation

As the investigation proceeds it will also be discovered that the order of salvation was characterized by a trinitarian orientation. The importance of the Trinity to Wesley's theology has already been noted in chapter three, so there is not much need to revalidate

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[25] Gunter, The Limits of Love Divine (1989), pp. 262-66. Outler agrees with the point that Wesley always held to the doctrine of justification by faith, Outler, 'Towards Re-Appraisal of John Wesley as Theologian', The Perkins School of Theology Journal, 14(1961), 8-9.

[26] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 156.

[27] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 156; cf. 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 121.

the point here. Perhaps it is worth noting that Wesley held that God the Father was the 'Author of faith and salvation' alone, through the merits of God the Son, and that the power and faith of salvation is contingent upon God the Spirit.[28] Wesley frequently expressed it in trinitarian ascriptions such as, 'God the Father, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved[...], God the Son, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood[...], God the Holy Ghost, who sheddeth the love of God abroad in our hearts[...]'.[29] In this respect Wesley's doctrine of salvation is not solely Christologically centred, as suggested by Deschner, or even pneumatologically centred, as suggested by Outler and Carter.[30] It is trinitarian centred.

This trinitarian emphasis found expression in two ways. The first way was through the experience of salvation. The person was seen to be created by the Trinity, in the image of the Trinity, redeemed by the Trinity, to be ultimately renewed in the image of the Trinity. By experiencing the Trinity in the order of salvation his trinitarian theology was not so much speculative as it was experiential (or 'experimental'). Wesley said (quoting Jean-Baptiste de Saint-Jure, also 'the Marquis de Renty'), "'I bear about with me an experimental verity and a plenitude of the presence of the ever-blessed Trinity'".[31] The experience of the Trinity was often the subject of Wesley hymns. For example,

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[28] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745), BEW, XI, 107-08.

[29] 'The Love of God' (1733), BEW, IV, 345; cf. the trinitarian ascriptions at the ends of 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 130; 'The Witness of Our Own Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 313; 'Sermon on the Mount, IX' (1748), BEW, I, 649; 'The General Spread of the Gospel' (1783), BEW, II, 499; 'Death and Deliverance' (1725), BEW, IV, 214; 'Seek First the Kingdom' (1725), BEW, IV, 223; 'On Guardian Angels' (1726), BEW, IV, 235; 'On Mourning the Dead', BEW, IV, 243; 'The Promise of Understanding' (1730), BEW, IV, 289; 'The Image of God' (1730), BEW, IV, 303; 'The One Thing Needful' (1734), BEW, IV, 359.

[30] Deschner, Wesley's Christology (1985); Carter, Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit (1974); BEW, I, 81.

[31] 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 37, note 80.

> Creeds and books can nothing do,
> Unaccompanied by grace;
> Grace must form my soul anew,
> Give me to discern Thy face,
> Bring my faithful heart the power
> God in persons three to' adore.[32]
>
> I find, and every moment feel
> The Triad in my heart.[33]

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were all three a part of the Christian experience of salvation. While most Methodists would not have been able to articulate any comprehensive doctrinal statement of the Trinity, they were able to relate to others a heart-felt experience of the Trinity.[34]

The experience of the Trinity through salvation inevitably gave expression through worship, which is the second characteristic of his trinitarian theology. The experience of a trinitarian salvation shaped the nature of early Methodist worship, which was primarily worship of the one-in-three through the three-in-one, or worship of the triune God through God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.[35]

2.7. It is Dialogical in Nature

While the triune God alone was seen by Wesley as the author of faith and salvation, God does not participate in salvation alone. On this basis Wesley also said there were three parts to justification,

> upon God's part, his great mercy and grace; upon Christ's part, the satisfaction of God's justice by the offering his body and shedding his blood, 'and fulfilling the law of God perfectly'; and upon our part, true and living faith in the merits of Jesus Christ.[36]

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[32] "Hymns on the Trinity" (1767), No. 6 "Hymns and Prayers".

[33] "Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity" (1767), No. 33.

[34] See, AM, 13(1790), 247, 441; (1779), 204; JWL, VI, 265; VII, 392; Rack, 'Early Methodist Visions of the Trinity', PWHS, XLVI, 38-44, 57-69. Perhaps this helps to explain early Methodists' visions of the Trinity.

[35] Bryant, 'Singing Theology: The Wesleys on the Trinity', The Preacher's Magazine, 68(1991)1, 43-44.

[36] 'The Principles of a Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 51; cf. 'The Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 148.

While the primary cause of justification was the Trinity, Wesley's doctrine of justification also accommodated human response and participation in the process. Wesley's expression for this participation was free-will, or the ability to say yes or no to God's gracious offer of salvation on the basis of the merits of the death and resurrection of Christ. This implies that Wesley had a progressive Christology, namely, beginning with a 'satisfaction' atonement and then progressing to embrace a 'moral example' Christology which is validated by human participation.[37] It will be suggested below that one might see this as the dialogical nature of the relationship between the triune God and the human person. It will be seen that the dialogical nature of salvation had implications for the nature of the atonement and the nature of the righteousness of Christ as the basis of justification, both of which accommodated a human response. This accommodation of a human response ultimately shaped the nature of justification itself.

2.8. It is Dialectical in Nature

The last feature of Wesley's order of salvation, and perhaps the cause of much misunderstanding, is its dialectical nature. Wesley's order of salvation is filled with unsynthesized dialectics, which result in what would perhaps be better called paradoxes. Within its framework one sees doctrines and traditions working together in one system which would ordinarily seem mutually exclusive outside of the framework. For example, one sees at the same time a doctrine of religious experience as influenced by Pietism, and a doctrine of knowledge as influenced by rationalism and empiricism; the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith, and something of a Catholic doctrine of works; an understanding of God's omniscience and omnipotence which allowed free-will; a salvation which is experienced as both crisis and process; a salvation which advocated

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[37] My thanks to Mark Forrester for making this point.

both baptismal regeneration, and rebirth; a sanctification which may be obtained now, but is also yet to come; a theology in which both the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and preaching as means of grace are honoured. This list names just a few.

Perhaps for our interests the greatest dialectic was created by Wesley's reformed/Augustinian doctrine of original sin (which had, comparatively speaking, a weak doctrine of existential sanctification), and his doctrine of sanctification which had been influenced by the eastern church[38] (which had, comparatively speaking, a weaker doctrine of original sin). The link holding the two together within his own order of salvation was a definition of personal sin, derived from Catholic-influenced Anglican tradition of moralism, a hybrid one might well call 'Anglo/Catholic moralism'. As one looks at this strange collection of doctrines, Wesley's theology takes on the appearance of a 'cut-and-paste' theology. Perhaps this is why Wesley is looked to as a paradigm for ecumenism, and why so many different traditions look to Wesley as their theological patriarch. Sometimes one's interpretation of Wesley is like taking a ink blot test. What one sees in Wesley depends greatly on what one brings to Wesley. Nonetheless, it must be admitted that in his theology one finds curious, and sometimes bizarre, combinations of theology, all of which were held together within Wesley's interpretation of the Christian system- his order of salvation.

3. Constructing the Order of Salvation

Having now looked at several attributes of the nature of Wesley's order of salvation, we will now attempt to reconstruct it. There are two key sermons one must consider in understanding Wesley's order of salvation- 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), and 'On Predestination' (1773). Of, 'The Scripture Way of

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[38] See, Campbell, Wesley and Christian Antiquity (1991), pp. 55-71.

Salvation' Outler has said, it is 'the most successful summary of the Wesleyan vision of the *ordo salutis* in the entire sermon corpus.'[39] For this reason Collins and others have used this sermon as the blue-print by which they have constructed Wesley's order of salvation.[40] But this sermon on its own provides an incomplete picture of what Wesley eventually understood as the order of salvation. In, 'The Scripture Way of Salvation', Wesley acknowledged that the order of salvation consisted of 'the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul till it is consummated in glory'. However, in that sermon the order of salvation started only with prevenient grace and stopped with entire sanctification.[41] The sermon, 'On Predestination' added predestination and glorification, two essential concepts to a fuller understanding of Wesley on salvation. The sermon, 'On Predestination' shows how God predestined salvation, and to what end this salvation was predestined. Admittedly, the order of salvation as it will appear here is a composite sketch made from snap-shots of two sermons. There were subtle shifts in Wesley which would have altered the above list at different points in his career, which means it cannot, and indeed is not said to be definitive.[42] However, from this greater list there are five fixed reference points- predestination, prevenient grace, justification by faith, sanctification by faith, and glorification. These will serve as the main points in Wesley's order of salvation, as it is used in our discussion of the issues relating to his doctrine of sin, and these points will be filled in with other material.

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[39] Outler, BEW, II, 154.

[40] Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1989), p. 12. Deschner has suggested a link between the history of Christ and the order of salvation, and that Christ's history in turn was a recapitulation of Israel's history, Wesley's Christology (1985), p. 60.

[41] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 156-62.

[42] See Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1989), p. 12.

3.1. Predestination

The issue of predestination was an important one to Wesley.[43] Unfortunately, it will only be briefly discussed here. It must be pointed out that several of the philosophical and theological elements of predestination (the 'eternal now', God's foreknowledge, etc.) were discussed in chapter two, where it was shown how Wesley's doctrine of free-will arose out of the issue of theodicy. Given his doctrine of free-will as a presupposition, predestination was not determinism, which would have made morality impossible by contradicting the justice of God.[44] Consequently, predestination was not a 'chain of causes and effects', but simply showed, '*the method in which God works--the order* in which the several branches of salvation constantly follow each other', which is to say, presupposing the origin of evil and original sin, predestination was the ordering of salvation.[45] 'In other words,' he wrote,

> God decrees from everlasting to everlasting that all who believe in the Son of his love shall be conformed to his image, shall be saved from all inward and outward sin into all inward and outward holiness. Accordingly it is a plain, undeniable fact: all who truly

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[43] For example, see, 'Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination. Extracted from a late author [Robert Barclay]' (1741); 'A Dialogue between a Predestinarian and His Friend' (1741), Works, X, 259-266; 'The Scripture Doctrine Concerning Predestination, Election, and Reprobation' (1741), also in, Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion (1758); 'Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints' (1751), Works, X, 284-98; 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), Works, X, 204-59.

[44] For an example of this kind of argument see 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), Works, X, 233-34. For Wesley's attack upon Henry Home's determinism in Part I 'Essay II. Of Liberty and Necessity', in, Essays on the Principles of Natural Religion (Edinburgh: 1751), see 'Thoughts upon Necessity' (1774), in Works, X, 457-74. For a similar attack upon the determinism of David Hartley, in his Observations on Man (1749), see Wesley's, 'A Thought on Necessity', AM, 3(1780), in Works, X, 474-480; also 'Fate and Destiny, inconsistent with Christianity: in eight Conferences between Epenetus and Eutychus: extracted from Mr. Edward Bird', AM 3(1780); 'An extract from a volume entitled, A Review of Dr. Priestley's Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. Whether Liberty be essential to practical Virtue; and of moral and practical Necessity', AM 11(1788), 12(1789), 13(1790).

[45] 'On Predestination' (1773), BEW II, 416.

> believe in the name of the Son of God do now 'receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls'; and this in virtue of the unchangeable, irreversible, irresistible decree of God: 'He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.'[46]

From this two points should be made. First, this view of predestination constructs the ordering of salvation which the believer perceives, rather than a prospective pattern which is pre-set. Second, predestination is what gave salvation its teleos, which was conformation of the redeemed to the Christological image of the triune God. By looking at predestination in this way he harmonized the concept of eternal decrees to his views of free-will, free-grace, and Christian perfection.

3.2. Prevenient Grace

The first step in the order of salvation 'is usually termed (and very properly) "preventing grace"'.[47] It consisted of 'all the "drawings" of "the Father"', Christ's illumination of the soul, and all the "convictions" which the Spirit works'.[48] This is the universal human experience of the irresistible workings of the Holy Spirit. In doing so prevenient grace as a work of the Spirit became a constitutive element in Wesley's epistemology of sin, since the concept includes, 'the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight transient conviction of having sinned against him.'[49] This epistemology of sin was actually made possible by the re-inscription of a certain amount of free-will, and the moral law.

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[46] 'On Predestination' (1773), BEW, II, 418.

[47] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 203.

[48] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 156-57; cf. 'Heaviness through Manifold Temptations' (1760), BEW, II, 230. It is interesting to compare Wesley's doctrine of prevenient grace with the 'Canones et Decreta Dogmatica Concilii Tridentini' (1546), fifth session, chapters V-VI, Schaff, Creeds (1990), II, 92-93.

[49] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 203.

3.2.1. Prevenient Grace and Free-Will

It was seen in chapter three how in the fall, the moral image of God was completely lost, while the natural and political aspects of the image of God were marred. Prevenient grace assured that every person had a certain measure of 'free-will' supernaturally restored in order to guarantee that a decision for good or evil, obedience or disobedience would be made.[50] MacFadyen has interpreted this characteristic of free-will as the 'dialogical' aspect of the Divine-human relationship.[51] I shall use the term to describe Wesley's understanding of God's prevenient restoration of the human ability to say yes, or no to God's offer of saving grace and a right relationship with the Father, through Son, by the Spirit. Without the dialogical aspect of free-will there is only a monologue, in that the human response is denied by God. Without prevenient grace, the divine-human relationship would be just that, a monologue.

A free-will that was essentially dialogical in nature was the sort of free-will Wesley spoke of. It was not a type of Pelagian freedom from original sin, but the ability to say yes to God's salvation in order to be freed from the sickness of sin, and restored to a right relationship with God. The re-inscription of liberty and will was seen by Wesley to be in-itself a gracious, prevenient act- the hallmark of his Arminianism. Without the dialogical nature made possible by prevenient grace, Wesley would have been no different from Calvin. Without original sin and the deprivation of the moral image, Wesley would have been no different from Pelagius. He stood a hair's breadth from what he considered a precipice on either side. The dialogical nature of free-will is what provided him the balance from falling into either extreme.

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[50] 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), Works, X, 229-30; cf. 'Remarks on Mr. Hill's Review' (1772), Works, X, 392.

[51] McFadyen, Personhood (1990), pp. 42-3, 224-30.

3.2.2. Prevenient Grace and the Moral Law

Liberty was not all that was re-inscribed. So was the moral law, which was for Wesley, 'the knowledge of God, his will, and his law'.[52] In other words, the moral law was tantamount to 'eternal reason' as the nature of God.

First, the moral law is predicated on knowing God's will. Thus, knowing God's will is to know God. The moral law had its beginning 'beyond the foundation of the world',[53] and was in fact given to the angels in heaven.[54] This pre-existent law was, 'a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the divine nature[...]'.[55] But the law is more than just a picture of God. It is God. God's law is God's will, and 'the will of God is God himself'.[56] Consequently, to be filled with knowledge of God's law is to be filled with God. Collins has suggested that this theme of 'a copy of the eternal mind' shows something of a Platonic influence, and suggested it was probably mediated to Wesley through John Norris, one of the Cambridge Platonists.[57] On the other hand, Outler,[58] and Deschner,[59] have both observed

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[52] ENNT, Colossians 3.10.

[53] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 6.

[54] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 8.

[55] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 9, 10.

[56] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 13.

[57] Collins, 'John Wesley's Platonic Conception of the Moral Law', WTJ, 21(1986), 116-28; Collins, 'John Wesley's Theology of Law' (1984), pp. 60-65. He is correct in saying Wesley refers to Plato's Phaedrus, but it is indirectly. He it is more likely that he is quoting Cicero, De Officiis, I.5, where there is in turn a reference to Phaedrus, 250d. See, Outler, BEW, II, 9, note 22. Also, see English, 'The Cambridge Platonists in Wesley's "Christian Library"', PWHS, 36(1968), 161-68. Wesley extracted several Cambridge Platonists (Ralph Cudworth, Nathanael Culverwel, Henry More, Simon Patrick, John Smith, John Worthington) in 7 of 50 volumes contained in the CL. He 'changed' their views by editing them, with his deletions becoming an index of his disagreements with them. In addition to their views on moral law, Wesley also agreed with them that sanctification is the perfection of the believer (e.g. Cudworth, CL, XVII, 32; Worthington, CL, XXIII, 270).

[58] BEW, II, 9 note 20.

[59] Deschner, Wesley's Christology (1985), p. 95.

the deliberate Christological connotations of the moral law, and the assignment to the moral law the Christological predicates of Hebrews 1.3,[60] in which Christ is seen to be not just the personification of the moral law, but its incarnation. Christ is moral law, or eternal reason incarnate. In either case, the moral law is established as a picture of the divine mind which is tantamount to 'eternal reason' (as was discussed in the introduction and chapter one), and integrated into the created order, which provides more evidence as to the centrality of 'eternal reason' to Wesley's 'Christian system'. The 'divine mind' or 'eternal reason' is eventually expressed as God's image, revealed Christologically, and born anthropologically, in the souls of human persons, by which the believer is able to have the 'mind which was in Christ'.

Second, the eternal moral law of God was to be distinguished from the ceremonial law of Moses.[61] Wesley did have a variety of ways of expressing the contents of the moral law.[62] In one instance he described it as the golden rule;[63] in another, as the Sermon on the Mount;[64] and in still another, the ten commandments.[65] Where Adam was concerned, the content of moral law was given to him in Genesis 2.17, shortened by Wesley to the phrase, 'Do this and live',[66] which was 'engraved on his heart by the finger of God' and

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[60] See, ENNT, Hebrews 1.3.

[61] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 4-5; 'The Law Established through Faith, I' (1750), II, 21; 'The Law Established through Faith, II' (1750), II, 33-4; ENNT (1755), Galatians 2.16. This common distinction is also found in Calvin, Institutes, 2.7.1-3; Luther, Epistle to the Galatians, 2.19, 4.27; Arminius, Works (1825), II, 196-201. Cf. Irenaeus, "Against Heresies", 4.12-17 (ANF, I, 475-84).

[62] Collins, 'John Wesley's Platonic Conception of the Moral Law', WTJ, 21(1986), 117.

[63] 'Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount' (1750), BEW, I, 660-61.

[64] 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, V' (1748), BEW, I, 555-60; and, Works, XI, 486.

[65] 'Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, V' (1748), BEW, I, 551; 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 6.

[66] 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 203, 210; 'What is Man?' (1787), BEW, IV, 26; 'The Duty of Receiving the Lord's Supper' (Robert Nelson, attr. to Wesley), BEW, IV, 527.

'coeval with his nature'.[67] The moral law as the golden rule, the ten commandments, and even the sermon on the mount were all different expressions of the same thing, a point missed by Oswalt, who thought Wesley was at best vague on this point.[68] They were commonly expressing love for God and neighbour, the way in which Wesley ultimately understood the moral law.[69] The moral law gave the moral image both relational and ethical aspects and all its Christological connotations.[70]

The purpose of the moral law being re-inscribed onto the hearts of individuals was threefold. First, it was to convince the world of sin. However, the moral law had to always work in conjunction with the Holy Spirit, although the Holy Spirit need not work with the moral law. This ultimately made conviction of sin, 'the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost, who can work it without any means at all, or by whatever means it pleaseth him[...]'.[71] The preaching of the law enhanced the re-inscribed moral law and helped the Holy Spirit to convict individuals of sin. This was both the prelude and the presupposition to the evangelical preaching of the Gospel in Wesley's ministry, perhaps one of the keys to the frequently astonishing and incredible responses (often described as 'madness' by his critics) to his preaching.[72] This is virtually inseparable from the

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[67] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 7; cf. 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 184; 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, V' (1748), BEW, I, 552-53.

[68] Oswalt, 'Wesley's Use of the Old Testament in his Doctrinal Teachings', WTJ, 12(1977), 46.

[69] 'The Love of God' (1733), BEW, IV, 330-45.

[70] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 7.

[71] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 15; cf. BEW, XXVI, 482-89 (1751).

[72] e.g. William Warburton, 'The doctrine of grace; or, The office and operations of the Holy Spirit vindicated from the insults of infidelity and the abuses of fanaticism[...]', 2 vols, paginated continuously (1763), pp. 208 ff.; and Wesley's response, 'A Letter to the Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Gloucester. Occasioned by his Tract[...]' (1763), in BEW, XI, 467-538; note also, 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I', in BEW, XI, 196-201. See, Hillman, 'Grace in the Preaching of Calvin and Wesley' (1978), p. 63; Holland, '"A Species of Madness": The Effect of John Wesley's

(continued...)

second use of the law in bringing the sinner 'unto life, unto Christ, that he may live', by acting the part of a 'severe schoolmaster', driving by force, rather than drawing by love.[73] The third use of the law, was initially the means by which the Spirit prepared the believer for 'larger communications of the life of God' by convincing the believer of remaining sin; and secondly, it was the means 'whereby he empowers them to do what his law commands; and lastly, 'in confirming our hope of whatsoever it commands and we have not yet attained, of receiving grace upon grace, till we are in actual possession of the fullness of his promises'.[74] While the content of the moral law may have been Christological in nature, its application to the believer's life was the activity of the Holy Spirit.[75]

This indicates an important role for the law, not just in the conversion of sinners, but also in conviction of sin in believers.[76] For all practical purposes it could be said Wesley's rigorous schemes for self-examination, and even Susanna Wesley's simplified ascetic rule for that matter, can be seen as an extension of the third use of moral law in the life of believers.[77] In this way Wesley sought to combat the

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[72](...continued)
Early Preaching', PWHS, 39(1973), 77-85; Sargant, Battle for the Mind (1957), p. 78; Dimond, The Psychology of the Methodist Revival (1926), pp. 99, 117, 163; Wood, The Burning Heart (1967), p. 230; Outler, BEW, I, 200-01.

[73] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 16. This should be compared to his advice given 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 387, 'Q. In what manner should we preach sanctification? A. Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward: To those who are, always by way of promise; always drawing, rather than driving.'

[74] 'Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 16-17.

[75] cf. Calvin's use of the law, Institutes, 2.7.6-13; and Luther's use of the law, Commentary on Galatians, 3.19. While similarities may be seen, Wesley's uses of the moral law seems to have been his own, Outler, BEW, II, 15 note 60.

[76] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 317-34.

[77] See, 'A Collection of Forms of Prayers for Every Day in the Week' (1733); 'A Scheme of Self-Examination, used by the first Methodists in Oxford', in AM 4(1781), 319; 'The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies' (1743), BEW, IX, 69-75; (continued...)

Antinomians, who, in one sense, asserted that Christ had abolished the moral law.[78] It was this problem Wesley sought to address in his three sermons on the law.[79] On the other hand, there was the inherent danger in re-inscription of the moral law leaning towards moralism. It was only because of his doctrine of original sin and total depravity that he could say no one could be saved by the works of the moral law.[80]

It is therefore difficult to accuse Wesley of allowing for sin to be committed through ignorance of the moral law. 'Whoever said or thought so?' Wesley responded to such a charge, and replied, 'Ignorance is not, but mistake is.'[81] Sin done in ignorance is not really possible especially when kept together with Wesley's understanding of the moral law of God, and the role of the Spirit in animating the moral law. Unless the cognitive and volitional aspects of his understanding of sin are related to this aspect of his concept of prevenient grace his doctrine of sin is critically and severely weakened.

3.2.3. Prevenient Grace and 'Natural Conscience'

From the re-inscription of the moral law comes Wesley's concept of 'natural conscience'[82] or as some

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[77](...continued)
'Rules of the Band Societies, Drawn up Dec. 25, 1738', BEW, IX, 77-8; 'Directions given to the Band Societies, Dec. 25, 1744', BEW, IX, 79.

[78] See, 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 278; 'A Dialogue between an Antinomian and his Friend' (1745), Works, X, 266-76, Wesley's transcription of his conversations with Zinzendorf; 'A Second Dialogue between an Antinomian and his Friend' (1745), Works, X, 276-84, Wesley's response to William Cudworth's, 'Dialogue Between a Preacher of God's Righteousness and a Preacher of Inherent Righteousness' (1745).

[79] 'The Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), 'The Law Established through Faith, I and II' (1750), BEW, II, 1-43.

[80] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 278.

[81] JWL, IV, 155 (1761).

[82] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 156-57. The most influential source of influence on Wesley's understanding (continued...)

writers contemporary to Wesley chose to call it, the 'moral sense'.[83] He spoke of it in terms of the marred 'remains of the image of God' as including 'some discernment of the difference between moral good and evil, with an approbation of one and disapprobation of the other, by an inward monitor excusing or accusing[...].'[84] Wesley objected to the word 'natural' as there is really nothing 'natural' about its presence in man. It is a,

> supernatural gift of God, above all his natural endowments. No, it is not nature but the Son of God that is 'the true light, which enlighteneth every man which cometh into the world'. So that we may say to every human creature, 'He', not nature, 'hath shown thee, O man, what is good.' And it is his Spirit who giveth thee an inward check, who causeth thee to feel uneasy, when you walkest in any instance contrary to the light which he hath given thee.[85]

For Wesley, conscience is one's consciousness of Christ sensitized by the Holy Spirit, all of which are the gifts of Father. This fact notwithstanding, Wesley also introduced an element of rationality, saying, 'Many cases of conscience are not to be solved without the utmost exercise of our reason.'[86]

The re-inscription of the will and the moral law amounts to a partial renovation of the volitional and moral aspects of the image of God. Those, together with the marred remains of the image of God enabled Wesley to confidently say,

> Yet this [the impossibility of self-salvation] is no excuse for those who continue to sin, and lay the blame upon their Maker by saying: 'It is God only that must quicken us; for we cannot quicken our own souls.' For allowing

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[82](...continued)
of conscience was his maternal grandfather, Samuel Annesley, whose sermon on Acts 24.16 (published in, The Morning-Exercise at Cripplegate, 1661), Wesley abridged and published in the CL, in addition to quoting it in his sermon 'On Conscience' (1788).

[83] 'The Witness of Our Own Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 302, and note 9 where Outler traces the use of the phrase 'moral sense'.

[84] 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 163.

[85] 'On Conscience' (1788), BEW, III, 482.

[86] 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered' (1781), BEW, II, 592.

> that all the souls of men are dead in sin by *nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called 'natural conscience'. But this is not natural; it is more properly termed 'preventing grace'. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. Everyone has sooner or later good desires, although the generality of men stifle them before they can strike deep root or produce any considerable fruit. Everyone has some measure of that light, some faint glimmering ray, which sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And is seared as with a hot iron, feels more or less uneasy when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.[87]

Conscience as Christ-consciousness, evoked and sensitized by the Holy Spirit, is what Wesley termed prevenient grace. His understanding of irresistible grace which is given to 'every child of man'.[88] No one is without it, not even 'Mahometans', 'pagans', or 'the vilest of savages'.[89] It is as universal and irresistible as original sin itself. The wilful transgression of a known law of God does not result from a lack of grace, but is the result of one suppressing and not using the grace one has. This grace vindicates the justice of God.

3.2.4. Prevenient Grace and 'Splendid Sins'

Because the re-inscription of the moral law as a constitutive part of prevenient grace entailed a certain knowledge of good and evil, it also meant the possibility for one to do good works without them being considered 'splendid sins', on one hand, while on the other hand they were not given any attribute of saving

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[87] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 207. Cf. his objections to Taylor's use of 'nature' in, DOS, Works, IX, 267-69. Also, cf. Thomas Manton, Works, (1681), I, 181.

[88] 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 163.

[89] 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 163.

merit.[90] In doing so Wesley attempted to maintain the integrity of his evangelical understanding of justification by faith alone, while acknowledging a place for humanitarian kindness and morality that are 'good and profitable to men'.[91] Such pre-justification works are not the result of human goodness, but of God's prevenient grace. Because there can be no works to salvation (only works from salvation), there is still a wide difference,

> between Christianity and morality. Indeed nothing can be more sure than that true Christianity cannot exist without both the inward experience and outward practice of justice, mercy, and truth; and this alone [the outward practice] is given in morality. But it is equally certain that all morality, all the justice, mercy, and truth which can possibly exist without Christianity, profiteth nothing at all, is of no value in the sight of God, to those who are under the Christian dispensation [...]. However just, true, or merciful they may be, they are but atheists still.[92]

In Wesley's understanding, even an unjustified and unrepentant sinner may do something good, but it is ultimately done without any cause for self-congratulations, which is denied by God's preventing grace. It is not by one's inherent goodness that one acts in kindness, Christian or not. It is only by God's grace than any acts of mercy at all are done. Even then, 'all works done before justification have in them the nature of sin; and that, consequently, till he is

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[90] 'The Reward of Righteousness' (1777), BEW, III, 400-14 (see Outler's note 31 on p. 404 for the background to the phrase). This was a sermon Wesley preached in Lewisham before 'The Humane Society', 'instituted for the sake of those who seem to be drowned, strangled, or killed by any sudden stroke. It is a glorious design, in consequence of which many have been recovered that must otherwise have inevitably perished' (JWJ, VI, 175, 1777); cf. 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 192-93 and note 69; 'Predestination Calmly Considered' (1752), Works, X, 222; 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 282-83.

[91] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 192; cf. Article 13 of the 'Articles of Religion', and, 'Of Good Works' in, Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be read in Churches in the Time of Queen Elizabeth (1828).

[92] 'On Living Without God' (1790), BEW, IV, 174-75.

justified a man has not power to do any work which is pleasing and acceptable to God.'[93]

3.2.5. Prevenient Grace and Natural Theology

On the basis of the re-inscription of the moral law and prevenient grace Wesley can be said to have a natural theology, if by natural theology one means a universal human ability to know God that does not depend on special revelation.[94] However, the basis of Wesley's natural theology was not confined to the re-inscription of the moral law. Wesley's understanding of providence as God's guiding the course of human history (as was discussed in chapter two) can also be interpreted as a part of natural revelation.[95] But God can also be revealed through the natural order of creation. This seems to have been the assumption of his natural philosophy.[96] Something of that assumption was reflected in his sermon, 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), where Wesley said,

> If indeed God had stamped (as some have maintained) an idea of himself on every human soul, we must certainly have understood something of these, as well as his other attributes; for we cannot suppose he would have impressed upon us either a false or imperfect idea of himself. But the truth is, no man ever did, or does now find any such idea stamped upon his soul. The little which we do know of God (except what we receive by the inspiration of the Holy One) we do not gather from an inward impression but gradually acquire from without. 'The invisible things of God', if they are known at all, 'are known from the things that are made;' not from what

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[93] 'The Principles of a Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 50-51; cf. 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 113, in which Wesley cites 'Article XIII. Of Works done before Justification'. See 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 193, for a syllogism explaining why works before justification are not good.

[94] Hendricks, 'John Wesley and Natural Theology', WTJ, 18(1983)2, 7-17.

[95] HE (1776), I. §9.

[96] Cf. 'The Immensity of the Works of Creation', AM 10(1787), 442-3, 483-5, 538-9, 592, 642-3.

> God hath written in our hearts, but from what he hath written in all his works.[97]

While denying an innate knowledge of God, Wesley advocated the empirical observations acquired through impressions and sensations 'from without' by way of inspiration. In this respect Wesley had a qualified sympathy for Joseph Butler's work in which he associated natural revelation with the observation of nature.[98] The re-inscription of the moral law with natural philosophy combined, however, the intuitive with the empirical- two lights making up a natural theology.[99] But, in Wesley's opinion, all the lights of natural theology put together,

> availed no farther than to produce a faint twilight. It gave them, even the most enlightened of them, no [elinchos], no demonstration, no demonstrative conviction, either of the invisible or of the eternal world.[100]

Natural theology, empirical or intuitive, is not natural salvation. There was no such thing as natural salvation to Wesley. Saving knowledge of the eternal is perceived only by faith which apprehends through the work of the Holy Spirit the specific (or special) revelation of God in Christ as seen in the Scriptures.

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[97] 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 571. Cf. his curious comment in ENNT, Matthew 2.1, where he said the 'Wise men' were 'gentile philosophers, who, through the divine assistance, had improved their knowledge of nature, as a means of leading to the knowledge of the one, true God. Nor is it unreasonable to suppose, that God had favoured them with some extra-ordinary revelations of himself, as he did Melchisedec, Job, and several others, who were not of the family of Abraham.'

[98] Joseph Butler, Analogy of Religion: Natural and Revealed (1736). This was in spite of Butler's prohibiting Wesley from preaching in his diocese. See, BEW, XX, 112 (1746), and JWJ, V, 264 (1768); cf. BEW, XIX, 78 and note 98 (1739); BEW, XIX, 142 and note 9 (1740); 'Appendix B: Wesley's Interview with Bishop Butler', BEW, XIX, 471-74; Baker, 'John Wesley and Bishop Butler', PWHS, 42(1980), 93-100.

[99] Outler maintained that Wesley's understanding of our ideas of God are not empirical but intuitive, BEW, II, 571 note 14.

[100] 'Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 52-3, and notes 23, 24.

3.2.6. Prevenient Grace and Intuitionism

The question is how to understand the re-inscription of the moral law as a constitutive element of prevenient grace in a way which is consistent with his empiricism. One way in which re-inscription may easily be reconciled with his empiricism is by looking at prevenient grace, not as being born in each person, but as being 'infused', or 'breathed' into us by God through the Holy Spirit.[101] One attempt, at least implicitly, to reconcile the two appeared in the Arminian Magazine. There it was argued that the source of inspiration and grace was the interaction of the divine, the infinite, and the uncreated upon the souls of the created in a supernatural way as to produce ideas and sensations that are more forceful and vivid than the ideas and sensations produced by material objects. The conclusions one makes from such inspiration are of a different quality than the deductions and discoveries made from empirical observations and the ideas formed from them. Because,

> God, who is far more intimately present to our souls than corporeal objects are; who can act upon them invest them, and penetrate them may open their intellectual faculties, shew them the mysteries of his nature and providence by an intuitive view, and thus inspire them to write, speak, and think; to reveal what is hid, and foretell what is future, in a supernatural manner. For this reason it is that holy Writ calls the Prophets, the Seers, because their intellectual eyes were opened to see into the invisible world, and discover many wonders of Providence, past, present, and future.[102]

This 'intuitive view' of inspiration can equally be used to explain what Outler has called the 'intuitive knowledge' of God given by the Holy Spirit.[103] Wesley himself suggested such a view of inspiration when he said,

> Out of darkness he commands light to shine, and takes away the veil which the god of this

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[101] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 203.
[102] 'Of Inspiration', AM 9(1786), 36-7.
[103] Outler, BEW, I, 35, 59-60, 276 note 46.

> world had spread over our hearts. And we then see, not by a chain of *reasoning*, but by a kind of *intuition*, by a direct view[...].[104]

Here, and in many other places, Wesley made a clear distinction between empirical knowledge and spiritual knowledge which is mediated directly to the soul by the Holy Spirit. This tilts a bit towards an illuminist view of mysticism, an influence which was undeniably present in the early days of the formation of Wesley's theology.[105] Even after his explicit rejection of mysticism, he still saw the Holy Spirit as the one who provides the necessary knowledge utilized in prevenient grace and who appropriates it to the human soul.

3.2.7. Summary of Prevenient Grace

Sin is a willful transgression of a known law of God. Prevenient grace provides the knowledge necessary to make one cognizant of sin, which means it has more to do with the conviction of sin than with its forgiveness. It does this mainly by way of Wesley's concept of the 're-inscription'. Properly speaking the renovation of the image of God did not begin with justification or even sanctification, but in prevenient grace and the irresistible workings of the Holy Spirit. There are three important aspects to this re-inscription: namely the Holy Spirit, the moral law, and intuitionism. It is Wesley's intuitionism which attempts to balance his empiricism, thus providing an epistemology of sin. The knowledge of the moral law is further reinforced by the revelation of God by way of what amounts to a Wesleyan natural theology. Prevenient grace is given to each person not just as God's attempt to draw the person to Himself, but also to make each individual person responsible for personal sin. Beyond a measure of knowledge being restored through prevenient grace, a certain measure of liberty (or free-will)-- which provides the volition to violate the law of God-- was

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[104] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 481.

[105] Outler, BEW, I, 171 note 122; cf. Tuttle, Mysticism in the Wesleyan Tradition (1989), pp. 24-25

also restored. Through prevenient grace not only is a certain measure of knowledge restored, so is a certain measure of liberty, or free-will, which provides the volition to violate the law of God. Neither the cognitive or volitional aspects of sin was given through any innate sense, but through the work of the Spirit and the Word. This means that in spite of the fall there still remains in each person a faint image of God, albeit marred. Even the totally depraved are not totally ignorant of God's moral law. Thus, Wesley strikes middle ground between the moralists (such as John Taylor) on the one hand, and the Calvinists on the other. This is a divine gift which exceeds nature and becomes the basis for Wesley's doctrine of 'prevenient grace',[106] which drastically reduces the range of ignorance allowed by his doctrine of sin properly so called.

Prevenient grace was Wesley's first step in the order of salvation which was divinely predestined by God, and an essential part of Wesley's theological anthropology.[107] Collins has observed that given Wesley's notion of total depravity, it follows logically that 'irresistible grace' had to find its way somewhere into Wesley's order of salvation because human beings in the natural state have not power to accept or reject any offer of grace. For Wesley it was prevenient grace. For Calvin it was sanctifying grace.[108] This was the proverbial 'hair's breadth' which separated the two.[109]

3.3. Justification

The next stage in Wesley's order of salvation was justification, or more specifically, present

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[106] 'The Original, Nature, Properties, and Use of the Law' (1750), BEW, II, 7 note 10.

[107] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 203; Cho, 'Adam's Fall and God's Grace: John Wesley's Theological Anthropology', Evangelical Review of Theology, 10(1986)3, 202-13.

[108] Collins, Wesley on Salvation (1985), p. 24.

[109] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 284-85; cf. 'The Question, "What is an Arminian?" answered. By a Lover of Free Grace' (1770), Works, IX, 359.

justification, as Wesley actually had a doctrine of double-justification-- a doctrine rejected by the Lutherans and the Calvinists.[110] Because of the dialogical nature of Wesley's order of salvation, he did not hold to a doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Perseverance of the saints depended on God determining the elect, and the elect persevering unto salvation. On this basis justification was as certain and irresistible as election. Wesley, however, rejected such a notion. Without a doctrine of perseverance of the saints there had to be in Wesley's theology a doctrine of double justification, which consisted of 'present' and 'final' justification,[111] in which entire sanctification must go before justification on the last day.[112] One may have the assurance of 'present' justification by the witness of the Spirit, that is to say, that one's sins are forgiven 'now'.[113] What Wesley rejected was the notion that final justification is not contingent on faith alone but also on works done

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[110] Schmid, Doctrinal Theology (1899), pp. 430 ff.; cf. 'Augsburg Confession', Part I, Art. IV, VI, XX; Part II, Art. III; 'Formula of Concord', Art. III; and, 'The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines[..]', more commonly known as, 'The Westminster Confession of Faith' (1647), 'Chapter XI, Justification'.

[111] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 115, 130; cf. 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 206; cf. 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 190; 'An Answer to the Rev. Mr. Church's Remarks on the Rev. John Wesley's Journal' (1745), BEW, IX, 94-95; 'The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explain'd' (1746), BEW, IX, 178-79; 'Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's Farrago Double-Distilled' (1773), Works, X, 430-31, 444. Wesley's sources for double justification were probably Richard Baxter's Confession (1655), Aphorismes of Justification (1649); and John Goodwin's, Imputatio Fidei (1642), see Outler, BEW, I, 206 note 22.

[112] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 106; 'A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Horne: Occasioned by his later sermon Preached before the University of Oxford' (1762), BEW, XI, 444.

[113] See sermons 10-11, 'The Witness of the Spirit' (1746), 'The Witness of the Spirit (1767), BEW, I, 267-313. In, 'Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1763), Q. 20, Wesley stated that he thought it was possible for someone to have assurance from the Holy Spirit that they would not fall from God, Works, XI, 421-22.

subsequent to initial justification,[114] as suggested by Bishop Bull and James Horn.[115]

Initial, or present justification, consisted of repentance, faith, initial justification (i.e. pardon, forgiveness, acceptance, and initial sanctification), freedom from outward sin, and acts of piety and mercy. These attributes were reflected in what was perhaps his most succinct and normative statement on justification, which was actually his summary of the teaching of justification in the 'Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, the doctrine of the Church of England':

> (1). That no good work, properly so called, can go *before* justification;
> (2). That *no degree* of true sanctification can be previous to it;
> (3). That as the *meritorious cause* of justification is the life and death of Christ, so the *condition* of it is faith, faith alone; and
> (4). That both inward and outward holiness are consequent on this faith, and are the ordinary, stated condition of final justification.[116]

When stated negatively, Wesley thought: (1) Justification is not being actually made just and righteous, which is sanctification. (2) It is not 'the clearing us from accusation, particularly that of Satan', neither is it the clearing us from the accusation brought against us by the *law*.[117] (3) Neither does justification imply that God is *deceived* in those whom he justifies, i.e. that God thinks the justified 'to be what in fact they are not, that he accounts them to be otherwise than they are[..] or believes us righteous when we are unrighteous.'[118] This

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[114] BEW, XIX, 128 (Dec. 13, 1739); cf. 'An Answer to the Rev. Mr. Church's Remarks on the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Last Journal' (1745), BEW, IX, 99.

[115] George Bull, Harmonia Apostolica (1670); cf. BEW, XIX, 202-03 (1741), for Wesley's remarks upon reading Bull; cf. XIX, 281 (1742); James Horn, 'Works wrought through Faith a Condition of our Justification', in, The Works of the late right Reverend George Horne, D.D. (1831), III, Discourse LXII.

[116] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 115.

[117] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 187-88.

[118] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 188.

was an attack on a mild distortion of the Puritan doctrine of forensic justification in which the imputed righteousness of Christ allows God to justify the elect and regard them as if they were actually righteous.[119]

Positively, he thought: (1) 'The plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins' past, in 'thought, word, and deed'[120], through the merits of Christ[121]; and, 'received into God's favour; into such a state, that, if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved'.[122] (2) It is acceptance 'as if we had never sinned'.[123] (3) It is to be born of God.[124] (4) While not synonymous with justification, sanctification was started at justification.[125] If taken in the largest sense, justification, 'implies a deliverance from guilt and punishment, by the atonement of Christ actually applied to the soul of the sinner now believing on him[...]'".[126]

Who, then, are the justified? How one answers this apparently simple question determines one's order of salvation, and whether one holds to a doctrine of justification by faith or not. For example, in his attack on Wesley's preaching of justification by faith, George Smith asserted that sanctification preceded justification.[127] To Wesley, this was justifying the

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[119] BEW, I, 188 and note.

[120] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 189-90; cf. 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 157.

[121] Preface', A Treatise on Justification: Extracted from Mr. John Goodwin (1765), in Works, X, 317.

[122] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 275.

[123] 'Justification by Faith (1746), BEW, I, 190.

[124] 'The Principles of a Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 61.

[125] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 285; 'Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 387.

[126] 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 124.

[127] [George Smith], 'The notions of the Methodists farther disprov'd, in answer to their 'Earnest appeal', &c., with a vindication of the clergy of the Church of England from their aspersions; in a second letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley' (Newcastle: 1743), pp. 61, p. 7; and also, 'The notions of the Methodists fully disprov'd, by setting the doctrine of the Church of England concerning justification and regeneration in a true light; in a letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley' (Newcastle: 1743). Wesley makes note of this in, 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 108-09.

sanctified, or the godly. But, 'God *justifieth* not the godly, but the *ungodly*; not those that are holy already, but the unholy.'[128] Wesley thought Smith's problem was that he had confused 'fruits meet for repentance' with sanctification.[129] Sanctification and 'fruits meet for repentance' are not synonymous.

3.3.1. Justification and Repentance

Based on Acts 16.30-34, Wesley hyperbolically stated that, 'Repentance absolutely must go before faith',[130] saying, 'justifying faith cannot exist without previous *repentance*'.[131] (He would qualify this statement in another place, which will be seen below.) To Wesley repentance consisted of two types: legal, which 'is a thorough a conviction of sin', and brings forth fruit worthy of repentance; and evangelical, which 'is a change of heart (and consequently of life) from all sin to all holiness'.[132] Legal repentance was the repentance of sinners in conjunction with initial justification, while evangelical repentance was the repentance of believers in conjunction with entire sanctification. We will consider legal repentance at this time, and look at evangelical repentance in respect to entire sanctification.

Legal repentance consisted of two aspects. The first aspect was self-knowledge which consisted of the acknowledgement of one's 'corrupt, sinful nature', and

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[128] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 191.

[129] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 110.

[130] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 106.

[131] 'The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained' (1746), BEW, IX, 177; cf. 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 117, and note the textual difficulties surrounding this passage; cf. 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 127; 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 225; cf. ENNT, Acts 16.30-34; cf. 'A Roman Catechism, with a Reply thereto' (1756), Section II, in Works, X, 95, with its implicit attack on Bellarmine; 'Popery Calmly Considered' (1779), 'Section II. Of Repentance and Obedience', in Works, X, 143-44.

[132] ENNT (1755), Mt. 3.8.

one's 'actual sins, both in word and deed'.[133] For one to do this is to know one's self to be totally depraved sinner,[134] which caused Wesley to exclaim, 'Sinner, awake! Know thyself! Know and feel that thou "wert shapen in wickedness, and that in sin did thy mother conceive thee", and that thou thyself hast been heaping sin upon sin ever since thou couldst discern good from evil.'[135] The ones who do are the ones who are 'poor in spirit', and 'who know themselves', who are convinced of sin; those to whom God hath given that first repentance which is previous to faith in Christ.'[136]

The second aspect of legal repentance was derived from Matthew 3.8, which consisted of 'fruits meet for repentance'. By fruits meet for repentance he meant,

> forgiving our brother, ceasing from evil, doing good, using the ordinances of God, and, in general, obeying him according to the measure of grace which we have received. But these I cannot as yet term "good works", because they do not spring from faith and the love of God.' Although the same works are then good when they are performed by *those who have believed*.[137]

Such an understanding of repentance disqualified the 'fruits meet for repentance' as works unto salvation because they did not have God in Christ as their object,

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[133] 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 212. Cf. Calvin, Christian Institutes, I.i

[134] 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 225.

[135] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 480, also 477; cf. 'Awake, Thou That Sleepest'(1742), BEW, I, 147; 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 212-13; 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 350; 'Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 403; 'Sermon on the Mount, X' (1750), BEW, I, 653; 'Sermon on the Mount, XIII' (1750), BEW, I, 697; 'Spiritual Idolatry' (1781), BEW, III, 113. Believing that repentance preceded faith put Wesley in direct conflict with William Law's, The Spirit of Prayer (1749), which Wesley noted in 'On Dissipation' (1784), BEW, III, 123; cf. ENNT (1755), Mt. 5.3.

[136] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 477; cf. John Norris, Practical Discourses, I, 4: 'Poverty of spirit[...]is not a state of *life* but a state of *mind*, and we may take it either in opposition to covetousness or[..]to pride and highmindedness.', in BEW, I, 477 note 48; cf. also with CL, XLVI, 144-45.

[137] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745), BEW, XI, 106, quoted by Wesley (with only slight variation in punctuation) in, 'The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained' (1746), BEW, IX, 176; cf. 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' in Works, VIII, 275-76, 281-82.

or faith as their proper orientation.[138] Works can neither save nor sanctify. In this respect 'fruits meet for repentance' were similar to prejustification works of a humanitarian nature. However, experience of conviction of sin, which led to the 'fruits meet for repentance' often resulted in practical and ethical manifestations in preparation for the orientation of faith, which were often seen when,

> The drunkard commenced sober and temperate. The whoremonger abstained from adultery and fornication, the unjust from oppression and wrong. He that had been accustomed to curse and swear for many years now swore no more. The sluggard began to work with his hands, that he might eat his own bread. The miser learned to deal his bread to the hungry, and to cover the naked with a garment. Indeed the whole form of their life was changed. They had 'left off doing evil and learned to do well'.[139]

Although in and of themselves they did not justify, taken together repentance-as-self-knowledge and 'fruits meet for repentance' were in some sense necessary before justification.

But Wesley qualified his statement that repentance, more specifically the 'fruits meet for repentance', must always precede justification. He did this by distinguishing between the 'remote' and 'proximate' cause of justification.[140] He knew that in some instances, such as the thief on the cross next to Christ,[141] 'fruits meet for repentance' are not possible. Because they are not always possible they cannot always be strictly necessary, and consequently they can only be a 'remote' condition to justification. In spite of the ethical manifestations often associated

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[138] 'Hypocrisy in Oxford' (1741), BEW, IV, 396-99. Note the textual problems of this passage in note 31. Wesley was reacting to Bull's, Harmonia Apostolica.

[139] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part III' (1745), BEW, XI, 274-75.

[140] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 117; cf. 'A Letter to The Rev. Mr. Horne' (1761), BEW, XI, 451; also, 'An Answer to the Rev. Mr. Church's Remarks' (1745), BEW, IX, 96.

[141] ENNT (1755), Luke 24.40.

with 'fruits meet for repentance', because repentance is only remotely necessary to justification, repentance alone does not justify. Faith alone is the 'proximate' condition of justification, which means, 'there is no justification without it.'[142] This explicitly excluded repentance as conjunctive with faith as a condition for salvation. But together, faith as the proximate and repentance as the remote causes of justification, they were for Wesley the 'gate of religion'.[143]

3.3.2. Justification and Faith

'But what is *faith*?' Wesley would ask. His answer was usually,

> It is a divine 'evidence, and conviction of things not seen'; of things which are not seen now, whether they are visible or invisible in their own nature. Particularly, it is a divine evidence and conviction of God and of the things of God. This is the most comprehensive definition of faith that ever was or can be given, as including every species of faith, from the lowest to the highest.[144]

As the discussion in chapter one of the philosophical understanding of faith and its role in the scale of assent implied, there are differing degrees, or 'species' of faith. Among the species of faith he particularly noted the faith of a materialist, a deist,[145] a heathen, a devil, the Jews, John the Baptist, the apostles while Christ was on the earth, Roman Catholics, Protestants, and the faith of a servant. What these species of faith all have in common is an 'evidence and conviction of such or such

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[142] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 195-96.

[143] 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 335

[144] 'On Faith' (1788), BEW, III, 492; cf. 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion, Part I' (1745), BEW, XI, 106-07; 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 194; 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 160-61, 167-68; 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 184; 'The Reformation of Manners' (1763), BEW, II, 313; 'On Eternity' (1786), BEW, II, 369; 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 30; 'On Faith' (1791), BEW, IV, 188.

[145] That faith was necessary even to natural religion can be seen in NP (1777), V, 199-201.

truths'.[146] For Christian faith it is more specifically *fides quae creditur*, or the orthodox content of faith. As important as orthodoxy and proper teaching were to Wesley, *fides quae creditur*, to only 'believe that', cannot save, because it 'does not imply *the giving the heart to God*'.[147]

Saving faith consists of more than content. It must also consist of orientation. This orientation does not consist of self. Self-orientation is the essence of sin, and was the substance of the fall. Neither can it consist of works, which are tainted by the effects of sin, or self-orientation. This orientation must consist of,

> a faith in Christ- Christ, and God through Christ, are the proper object of it. Herein therefore it is sufficiently absolutely, distinguished from the faith either of ancient or modern heathens. And from the faith of a devil it is fully distinguished by this- it is not barely a speculative, rational thing, a cold, lifeless assent, a train of ideas in the head; but also a disposition of the heart. For thus saith the Scripture, 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' And, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy *heart* that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'[148]

Put more specifically, saving faith has as its focus the passion of Christ, or his 'passive righteousness' which will be discussed below. Christian faith is the unconditional trust in the saving merits of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.[149] When faith-as-assent is appropriated to justification in the context of the order of salvation it becomes *fides qua creditur*, belief in, or the act of faith as unconditional trust in the merits of Christ's passion and death to save the believer.[150] It was seen in chapter one how this faith

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[146] The list is composite one drawn from 'On Faith' (1788), BEW, III, 495-97; and 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 119-20.
[147] 'The Unity of the Divine Being' (1789), BEW, IV, 66.
[148] 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 120.
[149] 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 121.
[150] See Cushman, Experimental Divinity (1989), pp. 78-80, 174-76.

occurs not by rational assent in the analytical sense, but by rational assent in the sense of eternal reason, and on the basis of God's revelation in Christ. The instant God gives faith, whether in early childhood, in the prime of life, or in old age,[151] that "'faith is counted to him for righteousness"', so that God counts us righteous from the time we believe in Christ, the proper object of our faith.[152] This was to Wesley true faith, and 'as soon as anyone has true faith, in that moment he is justified',[153] and 'born of God',[154] not having a servile faith, but a filial faith, or the faith of a child of God.[155]

Even the faith of a child was expected to become the faith of, 'young man' and eventually the faith of a 'father', showing that even saving faith had its various degrees and maturity.[156] However, faith as Christ-orientation, whatever its degree, is the only condition of our present and final salvation.[157] Strictly speaking, this is the only thing we are required to do according to the covenant of grace.[158] Yet, because faith as orientation on Christ as its proper object is a part of the covenant of grace, it also is a gift of God,

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[151] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 194.

[152] Romans 4.5 in 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 196.

[153] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745), BEW, XI, 105.

[154] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 320.

[155] 'On the Discoveries of Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 35-36; 'Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith' (1788), BEW, IV, 49; 'The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption' (1746), BEW, I, 250; 'On Faith' (1788), BEW, III, 497-500.

[156] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 321; 'Sermon on the Mount, IV' (1748), BEW, I, 534-35; 'Christian Perfection' (1741), BEW, II, 105; 'On the Trinity' (1775), BEW, II, 384-85; 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 71-72; 'On Patience' (1784), BEW, III, 174-75; ENNT, Hebrews, 5.13-14; I Peter 2.3; cf. BEW, XIX, 153-57 (1740), where Wesley points out the fact that the degrees of faith were one of the things that separated Methodists from Moravians, see 'A Short View of the Difference between the Moravian Brethren, lately in England, and the Reverend Mr. John and Charles Wesley' (1745).

[157] 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 206.

[158] 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 209.

which is to say, it is not derived by human work or from human merit.[159]

Fides qua creditur, or the act of faith as Christ-orientation, in turn gives rise to the experience of faith, or, 'a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for *my* sins, that he loved *me*, and have himself for *me*.'[160] This moment of the revelation of Christ, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as the experience of faith, became the basis of his doctrine of assurance.[161]

In the end Wesley said that, strictly speaking, neither faith (as fides qua creditur, or fides quae creditur), nor works, justify us,

> But God himself justifies us, of his own mercy, through the merits of his Son only[...]. For our corruption through original sin is so great that all our faith, charity, words, and works, cannot merit or deserve any part of our justification for us. And therefore we thus speak, humbling ourselves before God, and giving Christ all the glory of our justification.[162]

The righteousness of Christ is the only merit for one's justification.

3.3.3. Justification and the Righteousness of Christ

Does this mean that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer? Historically, there was a noted shift in Wesley's understanding of the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ. In sermons before, 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765)- e.g. 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748, I.11), and 'Sermon on the Mount, IX' (1748, § 21)- when Wesley did use the phrase, he said it generally referred to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the pardoned sinner, 'with studied

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[159] 'An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745), BEW, XI, 47-48; 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 196; 'Of the Church' (1785), BEW, III, 49; BEW, XIX, 175 (Dec. 24, 1749); JWJ, IV, 305-09 (1759); cf. Ephesians 2.8.

[160] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 194; cf. BEW, XVIII, 249-50 (1738) and the language of his Aldersgate experience.

[161] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 290; cf. 'The Witness of the Spirit, I' (1746), 'The Witness of the Spirit, II' (1767), BEW, I, 269-98.

[162] 'The Principles of a Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 52.

indifference to its controversial overtones'.[163] By at least 1765, however, he eventually came to see the phrase 'the imputed righteousness of Christ' as being neither scriptural or necessary, in fact causing harm to many.[164]

Wesley was critical of the imputed righteousness of Christ as taught by Calvinists because it made no allowance for neither human response nor responsibility. He thought this led to antinomianism, and used the righteousness of Christ 'as a cover for[...] unrighteousness'.[165] The question then became, 'Does my obeying God add value to the perfect obedience of Christ?'.[166] That depends on what one thought Christ's righteousness to be, which was a crucial issue since Wesley affirmed with Luther, *'articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*- the Christian church stands or falls with it.'[167]

The landmark sermon in regards to the matter was, 'The Lord our Righteousness' (1765). There, the righteousness of Christ is seen as twofold- divine and human. The divine righteousness belonged to Christ's divine nature, namely his 'eternal, essential, immutable holiness; his infinite justice, mercy, and truth: in all which "he and the Father are one."' The human righteousness of Christ belong to his human nature It consisted of either the internal or external human righteousness. His 'internal righteousness' consisted of the image of God, which was,

> a copy of his divine righteousness[...]. It is a transcript of the divine purity, the divine

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[163] BEW, I, 481 note 93.

[164] 'Preface', 'A Treatise on Justification, Extracted from Mr. Goodwin' (1765), Works, X, 318; 'Remarks on Mr. Hill's Farrago Double-Distilled' (1773), Works, X, 383, 427, 430; cf. 'Minutes of some late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 277.

[165] 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765), BEW, I, 462; 'Thoughts on Christ's Imputed Righteousness' (1762), Works, X, 315.

[166] 'Thoughts on the Imputed Righteousness of Christ' (1762), Works, X, 312-15.

[167] 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765), BEW, I, 450-51, and note 15 on the aphorisms connection with Luther; cf. Hildebrandt, From Luther to Wesley (1951), p. 16 and note.

> justice, mercy, and truth. It includes love, reverence, resignation to his Father; humility, meekness, gentleness; love to lost mankind, and every other holy and heavenly temper[...].[168]

For the believer to be renewed in the image of God is essentially to be renewed in the image of the 'internal righteousness' of Christ.

The 'external righteousness' of Christ consisted of his innocence, in-as-much-as he did no wrong, which amounted to a 'negative' righteousness. It also consisted of a 'positive righteousness', which meant everything Christ said or did in every situation was in accordance with God's will. All of Christ's obedience amounted to his 'active' righteousness.

His 'passive' righteousness consisted of the 'kenosis' of Philippians 2.1-13,[169] and his suffering the 'whole will of God from the time he came into the world till "he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree[...]"'.[170] It is at this point, i.e. the passive righteousness of Christ as his passion and sufferings, that Christology is linked to Adam and 'O felix culpa!' as it was discussed in chapter three.

> For if Adam had not fallen Christ had not died. Nothing can be more clear than this; nothing more undeniable. The more thoroughly we consider the point, the more deeply shall we be convinced of it. Unless all the partakers of human nature had received that deadly wound in Adam it would not have been needful for the Son of God to take our nature upon him. Do you not see that this was the very ground of his coming into the world? 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. And thus death passed upon all', through him 'in whom all men sinned.' Was it not to remedy this very thing that 'the Word was made flesh'? That 'as in Adam all died, so in Christ all might be made alive'? Unless then *many* had been made sinners by the disobedience of one, by the obedience of one many would not have been 'made righteous'. So there would have beenno room for that amazing

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[168] 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765), BEW, I, 452-53. Notice the similarity with the 'copy' language of the 'divine mind'.

[169] 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation' (1785), BEW, III, 201; cf. ENNT (1955), Phil. 2.1-13.

[170] 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765), BEW, I, 453.

> display of the Son of God's love to mankind. There would have been no occasion for his 'being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross'.[...] The fall of Adam produced the death of Christ! Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth![171]

The passive righteousness of Christ was God's answer to the original sin of Adam, which made it the 'glorious fault'. The greatest quality of the passive righteousness was obedience as an accepted factor of the Father/Son relationship, so that relationality with the Father is marked by obedience and passive righteousness. It was the absence of obedience that severed the divine/human relationship in the beginning. Only Christ's obedience could restore it.

Although they have been separated for the sake of discussion, to Wesley the active and passive righteousness of Christ are never separated. It is 'with regard to both these' that Jesus is called, 'the Lord our righteousness', and one is forgiven and accepted by God.[172] The life and death of Christ and the righteousness of Christ are the only meritorious cause of the believer's justification.[173]

When it came to the issue of justification, Wesley was insistent that he never taught that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer. Instead, he taught, 'That God forgives him that is unrighteous as soon as he believes, accepting his faith instead of perfect righteousness.'[174] The basis of the imputation of faith as righteousness is unquestionably the righteousness of Christ. Consequently, Clifford is not entirely correct, when he said that when Wesley spoke of the imputation of righteousness he meant that the passive righteousness of Christ only was imputed to the believer, while the active righteousness of Christ was

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[171] 'God's Love to Fallen Man' (1782), BEW, II, 425-26, 433.
[172] 'The Lord Our Righteousness' (1765), BEW, I, 452-58.
[173] 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745), BEW, XI, 113-15; 'On the Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 143.
[174] 'Minutes of some late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 289; cf. 'The Righteousness of Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 206-07.

for imitation, not imputation.[175] Christ's passive and active obedience were seen as the foundation for faith being imputed as righteousness, both of which were necessary for salvation.[176] Wesley argued that while faith was imputed to the believer for *'preceding righteousness'*, faith was not counted to the believer for *'subsequent righteousness'*. On this basis he could say one's own righteousness does not precede justification, but is subsequent to it.[177]

This view was complimented and reinforced in the sermon, 'On the Wedding Garment'.[178] Wesley rejected a commonly held view, such as the one held by William Burkitt, that the wedding garment in Matthew 22.12 referred to the Lord's Supper.[179] Instead, he interpreted the wedding garment to mean 'the righteousness of the saints', and concluded,

> The righteousness of Christ is, doubtless, necessary for any soul that enters into glory. But so is personal holiness, too, for every child of man. But it is highly needful to be observed that they are necessary in different respects. The former is necessary to *entitle* us to heaven; the latter, to *qualify* us for it. Without the righteousness of Christ we could have no *claim* to glory; without holiness we could have no *fitness* for it. By the former we become members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. By the latter we are 'made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light'.[180]

By Christian righteousness he meant love of God and neighbour, expressed as inward and outward righteousness.[181]

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[175] 'A Sufficient Answer to Letters to the Author of Theron and Aspasio; in a Letter to the Author' (1757), Works, X, 302-04; cf. Clifford, Atonement and Justification (1990), pp. 177-81.

[176] Clifford, Atonement and Justification (1990), p. 191.

[177] 'The Law Established through Faith, I' (1750), BEW, II, 28-29.

[178] 'On the Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 140-48.

[179] BEW, IV, 140, note 2; William Burkitt, Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament (1700), Mt. 22.2-13; cf. ENNT on the same passage.

[180] 'The Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 144.

[181] 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 221-223.

Christian righteousness, or personal holiness, was the human response to the righteousness of Christ, resulting in the orientation of faith on Christ as its proper object. 'The imagination that faith *supersedes* holiness is the marrow on antinomianism'.[182] Consequently, Wesley interpreted the righteousness of Christ so as to allow a human response in an attempt to make the righteousness of Christ more consistent with the dialogical approach arising from the issue of free-will which stemmed from his free-will account of the origins of evil.[183]

The greatest anomaly in his normative expression of Christ's righteousness was in respect to infants. Where they were concerned, the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them because they are incapable of faith. 'Therefore no infant ever was or ever will be "sent to hell for the guilt of Adam's sin", seeing it is cancelled by the righteousness of Christ as soon as they are sent into the world.'[184] This was signified at infant baptism, which Wesley looked upon as the washing away of guilt of original sin, 'by the application of the merits of Christ's death'.[185] The imputed righteousness of Christ is cancelled when one commits one's first proper sin, which Wesley's called sinning away the 'washing of the Holy Ghost'.[186]

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[182] 'The Wedding Garment' (1790), BEW, IV, 148; cf. 'A Blow at the Root; or, Christ Stabbed in the House of His Friends' (1762), Works, X, 364-69.

[183] If one finds all of this a bit bewildering perhaps it is reassuring to know that Wesley did not think an understanding of the imputed righteousness of Christ was necessary for salvation, JWJ, V, 243-44 (1767).

[184] JWL, VI, 239-40 (1776).

[185] 'A Treatise on Baptism', in, A Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion (1758), II.1, in Works, X, 190. This was actually an abridgement of Samuel Wesley the elder's, 'The Short Discourse of Baptism', which appeared in, The Pious Communicant Rightly Prepared; or a Discourse concerning the Blessed Sacrament: wherein the nature of it is described, or obligation to frequent communion enforced, and directions given for due preparation for it, behaviour at and after it[...]To which is added, A Short Discourse of Baptism (1700).

[186] BEW, XVIII, 242-43 (May 24, 1738). For a comprehensive view of Wesley on the sacraments see Borgen, Wesley on the Sacraments (1985), and Staples, Outward Sign and Inward Grace (1991).

3.3.4. Justification and Works

Proceeding from the orientation of faith on God in Christ as its proper object was what could be described as a positive and negative righteousness belonging to the believer. The believer's expression of positive righteousness was good works. What Wesley was trying to show was that a biblical doctrine of faith and works had been ignored by people who carry either to an extreme-faith excluding works (or 'Solafidianism'),[187] and works excluding faith.[188] He thought the truth was found in between these two extremes. Faith imputed to the believer as righteousness does not 'shut out good works, necessarily to be done afterwards', because faith 'which brings not forth good works',[189]

> which doth not produce both inward and outward holiness, which does not stamp the whole image of God on the heart, and purify us as he is pure; that faith which does not produce the whole of the religion[...], is not the faith of the gospel, not the Christian faith, not the faith which leads to glory.'[190]

Proper Christian faith fills the heart with love, and love does the works of God, thus the 'altogether Christian' is one whose faith is 'working by love'.[191] Furthermore, it is unreasonable to expect to ever be 'sanctified', if one is not 'zealous of good works', making works essential to Christian growth, and being renewed in the image and mind of Christ.[192] For Wesley works were the result of the proper orientation of faith, and a properly orientated faith resulted in sanctification. The true praxis of such a faith was a

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[187] See, 'Cautions and Directions given to the greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies' (1762), Sect. III, 'Antinomianism', in Works, XI, 431.

[188] 'Sermon on the Mount, VII' (1748), BEW, I, 592-93; cf. 'Free Grace' (1739), BEW, III, 550-51.

[189] 'The Principles of a Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 51, 52; cf. 'A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion' (1745) BEW, XI, 106.

[190] 'Sermon on the Mount, XIII' (1750), BEW, I, 695-96.

[191] 'The Almost Christian' (1741), BEW, I, 139; cf. 'Sermon on the Mount, IX' (1748), BEW, I, 642-43, 'Righteousness is the fruit of God's reigning in the heart. And what is righteousness but love?'

[192] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 164.

constitutive element of true faith, both of which became an essential component of the Christian life, which is another contributing factor to Wesley's practical theology, and his social theology.[193] Below it will be seen how praxis as the result of the orientation of faith on Christ as its proper object is particularly necessary for sanctification.

3.3.5. Justification and Freedom from Outward Sin

The believer's expression of a negative righteousness was by not committing outward sin,[194] since, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil'.[195] It is precisely at this point that the understanding of sin properly and improperly so called, with its cognitive and volitional aspects as discussed in the previous chapter is implemented. The kind of sin the justified do not commit is sin properly so called, which is deliberate or willful sin.[196] This sin had been made known to the believer by prevenient grace as an epistemology of sin. Deliberate and willful sin was the outward sign of the loss of faith, which could only be lost through disobedience.[197]

3.4. Entire Sanctification

For Wesley, entire sanctification as a part of the order of salvation involved, the conviction of inward (original) sin;[198] second (evangelical) repentance;[199]

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[193] Marquardt, John Wesley's Social Ethics (1992), p. 135.

[194] 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 124; 'Christian Perfection' (1741), BEW, II, 110.

[195] I John 3.8, in 'The First-Fruits of the Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 245; 'The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption' (1746), BEW, I, 264; 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 320; 'Sermon on the Mount, V' (1748), BEW, I, 569; etc.

[196] 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 436.

[197] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 283; and the 'ordo peccare' in, 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 440-42; cf. 'The Wilderness State' (1760), BEW, II, 208-11, 214-17.

[198] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 165.

[199] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 163-64, 169.

faith unto entire sanctification;[200] entire sanctification, or being renewed in the image of God, and having the mind of Christ, so that one loves God and neighbour;[201] being cleansed from all inward sin;[202] and, continued growth in grace, and works proceeding from entire sanctification.[203]

3.4.1. Conviction of Remaining Sin

As justified Christians grow in grace they see more and more the 'desperate wickedness' of their own heart.[204] Soon they realize what a struggle it is not to sin outwardly, and frequently become 'backsliders'.[205] They feel

> a natural tendency to evil, a proneness to depart from God, and cleave to the things of earth. They are daily sensible of sin remaining in their heart, pride, self-will, unbelief, and of sin cleaving to all they speak and do, even their best actions and holiest duties. Yet at the same time they 'known that they are of God'; they cannot doubt of it for a moment. They feel 'his Spirit clearly witnessing with their spirit that they are the children of God'. They 'rejoice in God through Christ Jesus, by whom they have now received the atonement'. So that they are equally assured that sin is in them and that 'Christ is in them, but the hope of glory.[206]

This struggle is caused by 'two contrary principles in believers- nature and grace, the flesh and the spirit[...]'.[207] The principle of 'nature' arises from

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[200] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 165.
[201] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 160.
[202] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 168.
[203] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 164.
[204] 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 482-83.
[205] 'A Call to Backsliders' (1778), BEW, III, 211-26; cf. 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 350. For a negative reaction to Wesley's use of 'backslider' see Richard Hill, 'Five letters to the Reverend Mr. F[letche]r relative to his 'Vindication' of the minutes of the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, intended chiefly for the comfort of mourning back sliders and such as may have been distress and perplexed by reading Mr. Wesley's minutes or the vindication of them (1771).
[206] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 323.
[207] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 322.

the 'carnal mind',[208] the moral antithesis to the mind which was in Christ, which typified the attitude of the original sin. The presence of the carnal mind after justification indicates that although inward sin does not reign, it still remains.[209] To this point in his order of salvation Wesley would have been in agreement with the Lutheran response to the issue, who said the Christian is 'simul justus et peccator', at the same time both justified and a sinner. Although the Lutheran basis was that repented sins are covered by the imputed righteousness of Christ, while the cause of sin is never dealt with at its root.[210] The Calvinist response would have been essentially the same. According to the Westminster Confession the elect are freed from sin only after final perseverance and after entering into 'the state of glory only'.[211] The opposite of the Lutheran and Reformed views could be seen in Moravianism, as represented by the views of Spangenberg and Zinzendorf, who held that a Christian is justified and entirely

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[208] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 321, 329; 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 192; 'The Way to the Kingdom' (1746), BEW, I, 225; 'The First-fruits of the Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 239; 'The Witness of the Spirit, II' (1767), BEW, I, 291; 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 318; 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 341, 350; 'The Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 409; 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 479, 483; 'Sermon on the Mount, X' (1750), BEW, I, 658; 'Sermon on the Mount, XI' (1750), BEW, I, 665; 'The Law Established Through Faith, II' (1750), BEW, II, 42; 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 127; 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 165; 'Original Sin' (1759), BEW, II, 183; 'Of the Church' (1785), BEW, III, 52; 'On Dissipation' (1784), BEW III, 119; 'Heavenly Treasure in Earthen Vessels' (1790), BEW, IV, 162.

[209] 'On Sin in Believers' (1763), BEW, I, 319; 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 123-24 (note the interesting textual problem relating to II.5); 'The First-fruits of the Spirit' (1746), BEW, I, 245-46; 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 336-47; 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), BEW, I, 435-41; 'Sermon on the Mount, I' (1748), BEW, I, 482-83; 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), I, 159, 165-66; 'Of the Church' (1785), BEW, III, 53; 'On Temptation' (1786), BEW, III, 161; 'The Deceitfulness of the Human Heart' (1790), BEW, IV, 157; 'Death and Deliverance' (1725), BEW, IV, 212.

[210] Outler, BEW, I, 314, who also directs attention to, 'The Apology of the Augsburg Confession' (1531), Article II, 'Original Sin', §§35-45.

[211] Outler, BEW, I, 314, who also draws attention to 'The Westminster Confession', VI.v, IX.v, XIII-XVIII.

sanctified at the same moment, since Christian perfection is faith in the blood of Christ, which imputes the perfection of Christ to the believer.[212] Their sanctification of justification came into full bloom in 'The Christian Magazine', where it was stated, 'for all who are united to Christ by the Holy Spirit's dwelling in them are delivered from the guilt, the power, or, in one word the *being* of sin'.[213]

The recent publication of Wesley's early, and previously unpublished manuscript sermons has revealed that he once held to the Lutheran and Reformed views that the Christian is freed from sin 'in statu gloriae' (in the state of glory only), as can be seen in Wesley's first written sermon, 'Death and Deliverance' (1725).[214] While never freed from the 'tyranny of sin', the best a Christian could hope for was to be freed from the habits of sins.[215] Wesley's understanding that the Christian should be freed from at least 'wilful, habitual sin' arose from his interpretation of à Kempis. In the 'Preface' of Wesley's own publication of 'The Christian Pattern' (1735), he said that it is necessary for '...the soul be fully purged from all wilful, habitual sin...' before it could be perfected in love.[216] The tension between indwelling sin and holy living may be further seen in 'Circumcision of the Heart' (1733). There, Wesley identified circumcision of the heart with holiness, which directly implied being cleansed from sin and being 'renewed in the image of our mind'.[217] It would be easy for one to use the later period of Wesley's theological development to read into these words a state of sinlessness. However, his first published sermon, 'The Trouble and Rest of Good Men' (1735), still confirmed his Lutheran/Reformed view that

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[212] BEW, XIX, 211-5. Zinzendorf, however, was also of the opinion that Christians are miserable sinners until death.

[213] 'The Christian Magazine' (1762), 579.

[214] 'Death and Deliverance' (1725), BEW, IV, 212.

[215] BEW, XXV, 318-19 (1731).

[216] 'The Christian's Pattern: or a Treatise of the Imitation of Christ' (1735), § 9.

[217] 'The Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 402-3.

the Christian is freed from all sin in the state of glory only.[218] His transition from the Reformed/ Lutheran position was not even indicated in his post-Aldersgate sermon, 'Salvation by Faith' (1738).[219] There, sin was qualified once again by one very important word- 'habitual'. This leads one to conclude that up to this point (1738) Wesley's understanding of sin may be summarized in the following way: (1) he defined sin as a 'voluntary breach of a known law', giving sin a cognitive and volitional quality; (2) even so, the Christian would not be fully freed from the tyranny sin until death, it could only be mortified through holy living; which meant, (3) the best a Christian could hope for was to be freed from habitual and wilful sin.

However, just three years after his sermon, 'Salvation by Faith', in the sermon 'Christian Perfection' (1741), Wesley suddenly rejected the notion that 1 John 3.9 meant Christians do not sin 'habitually', saying,

> But by whom is this said? By St. John! No. There is not such word in the text, nor in the whole chapter, nor in all this Epistle, nor in any part of his writings whatsoever. Why, then, the best way to answer a bold [i.e. impudent[220]] assertion is simply to deny it.[221]

His criticisms of those who held to the 'habitual' interpretation would eventually become so strong that they bordered on the verge of ridicule, as in 'The Marks of the New Birth' (1748). There he said, 'But some men will say, "True; 'whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin' *habitually*." *Habitually*! Whence is that? I read it not.'[222] This positional shift was firmly completed in the sermon, 'The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God' (1748), where he said once again

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[218] 'The Trouble and Rest of Good Men' (1735), BEW, III, 534.
[219] 'Salvation by Faith' (1738), BEW, I, 124. Cf. Wesley's letter to the Bishop of Exeter, JWL, III, 323 (1750).
[220] See Outler's footnote, BEW, II, 107.
[221] 'Christian Perfection' (1741), BEW, II, 107.
[222] 'Marks of the New Birth' (1748), BEW, I, 420.

'whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin' and remarked,

> By 'sin' I here understand outward sin, according to the plain, common acceptation of the word: an actual, voluntary 'transgression of the law'; of the revealed, written law of God; of any commandment of God acknowledged to be such at the time that it is transgressed. But 'whosoever is born of God', while he abideth in faith and love and in the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving, not only 'doth not', but 'cannot' thus 'commit sin'.[223]

One should perhaps notice the deletion of any reference to habitual sin from this quote.

What caused this shift? Or was it just a case of semantics? Outler has suggested it was on account of his reading Robert Gell's, An Essay Toward the Amendment of the Last English Translation of the Bible (1659).[224] In the 'Preface', Gell implicitly argued for a new translation essentially because the old one encouraged a sinning religion. Instead, Gell saw in the Bible a teaching in which,

> The Lord requires of us not only a mortification and dying unto sin, but also a burial of all sin. They are two Articles of the Faith: 1. That Christ was dead. 2. That he was buried. And so, thought the Spirit, the sin must be put to death, Rom. 8.13. and buried by holiness and love.[225]

This was more or less the thesis of the work, in which he went to argue that those who say the remains of sin cannot be cleansed until death but far more trust in human death than the death of Christ. Sin, even

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[223] 'The Great Privilege...' (1748), BEW, I, 436. It was Richard Hill who was among the first to note Wesley's change, and was quick to accuse him of self-contradiction, a charge Wesley naturally denied. See, Richard Hill, 'A Review of All the Doctrines Taught by the Rev. Mr. John Wesley' (1772); 'Logica Wesleinsis; or, The Farrago Double-Distilled' (1773); and Wesley's replies, 'Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's 'Review of all the Doctrines taught by Mr. John Wesley' (1772); 'Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's Farrago Double-Distilled' (1773).

[224] Outler, 'Introduction', BEW, I, 84-5. See Wesley's diary for February 23, 1741; July 19, 1741, and his journal for April 17, 1777; also Charles Wesley's journal for July 10, 1741. Curnock has said, 'This work is the first on a list of books entered on the cover page of an early Oxford note-book in the Conference Office' (JWJ, VI, 143 note 3).

[225] Robert Gell, An Essay Toward the Amendment... (1659), 'Preface'.

habitual sin, must be cleansed in this lifetime before death.[226] In his sermon, 'There is no necessity for a wise and just man to sin', Gell utilized a definition of sin which was also volitional and cognitive in nature in order to define the sinless state.[227] In his sermon on 1 John 1.8, 'Some Saints not without Sin for a season', Gell continued to say that while no one is without sin, the Christian is not to remain in a sinning state. One is to press on to perfection and sin not. He concluded his thoughts in this section by saying,

> Much more might be written on this subject, had not my worthy friends Dr. Thomas Drayton[...]and Mr. William Parker published a Treatise upon the same argument, entituled *A Revindication of the possibility of a total mortification of sin in this life; And of the Saints perfect obedience to the Law of God, to be the Orthodox Protestant Doctrine, &c.*
>
> Now that we and many thousands more, in this and other nations, may not be thought *Insanire sine ratione*, to differ from others in these points of doctrine without *good reason*, I thought fit to annex hereunto a brief *Catalogue* cursorily gathered, of such *Scriptures* as peitos and *expressly*, or *per evolutionem terminorum, in terpretative*, by short and easie interpretation, speak the same things; as being such as prove a *possibility* of[...]*having not sin*, and *living a perfect life* according to the will of God.[228]

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[226] Gell, Essay, Sermon XVII, 'The Regenerate becomes Degenerate', p. 750, 752.

[227] Gell, Essay, p. 772.

[228] Gell, Essay (1659), pp. 779-80. Only two copies of Drayton and Parker's, Revindication are known to exist- one in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, and another in the McAlpine Collection at Union Theological Seminary in New York, NY. Outler assumes there was a Vindication, and that it has not survived. However, I have concluded that there never was a Vindication by either Drayton or Parker. The original Vindication was probably John Tendring's, A Vindication of the Orthodox Protestant Doctrine against the innovations of Dr. Drayton and Mr. Parker, Domestique Chaplain to the Right Honourable the E. of Pembroke (London: 1657). According to Tendring, Drayton and Parker stood up in a public congregation in Wilton, Wiltshire to oppose his views on sin and righteousness. It was that event which prompted the writing of Tendring's Vindication, in which he includes a series of letters from Drayton, where Drayton puts to Tendring two points for debate, 'That sinne must of necessity have a being in the saints while they live in the mortall body. That the righteousnesse of the law consisting in the love of God above all and of our neighbour as of

(continued...)

In Gell, Wesley saw someone who advocated not just that the Christian should live a holy life, but that the Christian could actually live a sinless life, freed not just from wilful and habitual sin, but from sin altogether, in perfect obedience to the will of God.

The conclusions inspired by Gell would eventually lead Wesley to say,

> But let us attend to the reason of the thing. Why cannot the Almighty sanctify the soul while it is in the body? Cannot he sanctify *you* while you are in this house, as well as in the open air? Can the walls of brick or stone hinder him? No more can these walls of flesh and blood hinder him a moment from sanctifying you throughout. He can just as easily save you from all sin in the body as out of the body.[228]

The short answer to the original question, 'Does sin continue in the soul as long as the soul continues in the body?' was eventually 'no' for Wesley. While sin did in fact remain in the justified he eventually believed that it must not remain. It was not just how he defined sin which enabled him to draw such conclusions. It was also how he understood the body/soul duality. More specifically, it was his concept of the ontological neutrality of the body, which was derived from his doctrine of creation. The will, which determined culpability, resides in the soul not in the body. If outward sin is to cease the root of it,

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[228](...continued)
our selves, cannot in this mortal life be fulfilled in the Saints by the grace of Christ.' On these points Drayton pointed out that while Tendring would affirm these positions (positions affirmed by the Westminster Confession), 'I have engaged myself to defend the contrary in both.' Drayton had already established his beliefs that perfection was the love of God and neighbour, which fulfills the law of love, and that it was attainable in this life time in 'The Proviso or Condition of the Promises[...]' (London: 1657). William Parker established his hope of sinless state in this life time in his critique of the Westminster Assembly, The Late Assembly of the Divines Confession of Faith Examined (London: 1651). Perhaps it should also be pointed out that Gell and Parker are also mentioned in AM, 2(1779), 397, in the context of a commentary on Acts 13.48. Nigel Smith has noted that Drayton, Gell, and Parker were known as 'perfectionists' (Perfection Proclaimed (1989) p. 99); cf. Conway Letters, M.H. Nicolson, ed. (New York: 1930), pp. 109, 275, 280, 350.

[228] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 80.

inward sin, or the carnal mind, must be dealt with, and in its place must be given the 'mind of Christ'. This realization led to the second repentance.

3.4.2. Second, or Evangelical Repentance

In the same way one was to repent and show the fruits meet for repentance in preparation for justification, believers are also to repent in preparation for sanctification. Whereas repentance for justification was largely for outward sin, repentance of entire sanctification was for inward sin, such as pride, self-will, love of the world, inordinate affection, the *triplex concupiscentia*, fear of dispraise, jealousies, resentment, covetousness, the love of money.[230]

What sort of 'fruits meet for repentance' did Wesley think should follow justification, being necessary to sanctification? He divided them into two groups- works of piety and works of mercy.[231] Works of piety consisted of public prayer, family prayer, praying in our closet, receiving the Supper of the Lord, searching the Scriptures, fasting, abstinence, or other forms of self-denial as health allows[232]. Works of mercy consisted of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, entertaining the stranger, visiting the imprisoned, and sick, etc. These are the repentance and fruits meet for repentance, which are necessary to full sanctification.[233] Works of piety were mostly using the chief 'means of grace'- prayer, Scripture, the Lord's

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[230] 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 336-41.

[231] 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767), BEW, I, 343 and note 65; 'Sermon on the Mount, II' (1748), BEW, I, 493; 'Sermon on the Mount, IV' (1748), BEW, I, 541; 'Sermon on the Mount, VI' (1748), BEW, I, 573; 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 166; 'Self-denial' (1760), BEW, II, 247; 'The Danger of Riches' (1781), BEW, III, 244; 'On Charity' (1784), BEW, III, 299; 'On Zeal' (1781), BEW, III, 314-15; 'On Visiting the Sick' (1786), BEW, III, 385-86; 'On Faith' (1788), BEW, III, 500-01; 'On Worldly Folly' (1790), BEW, IV, 135.

[232] 'Self-denial' (1760), BEW, II, 241. This was a touchy subject with Wesley because of the death of Richard Morgan, BEW, XXV, 335-44; cf. 'Minutes of Several Conversations' (1789), in Works, VIII, 316.

[233] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 166.

Supper, as channels, of God's 'preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace'.[234] They are done out of love of God, and if separated from the Holy Spirit they cannot profit at all.[235] As means of grace they are not works unto salvation, because one should not expect salvation from them. They were works from salvation through which one may seek sanctification.[236] Works of mercy were mostly the believer being a means of grace, so that 'whatever grace you have received of God may through you be communicated to others; that every holy temper, and word, and work of yours, may have an influence them also'.[237] Works of mercy are an expression of the believer's love of neighbour, and by serving one's neighbour, one serves God in one's neighbour.[238] In this way the believer's works of mercy can be seen as what I shall call 'sacramental holiness'. Together, works of piety and mercy could be seen as a positive righteousness. They also indicate that for Wesley Christian devotion leads to social action.[239] The individual transformation which resulted from the orientation of faith on Christ as its proper object, resulted also in social transformation,[240] once again showing the practical and holistic quality of his theology.[241]

3.4.3. Faith unto Entire Sanctification

Just as one is justified not by works but by faith, so one is entirely sanctified not by works, but by faith. 'Faith is the condition, and the only condition of sanctification[...]none is sanctified but he that believes; without faith no man is sanctified'.[242] And, 'If you seek it by faith, you may expect it *as you are*,

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[234] 'The Means of Grace' (1746), BEW, I, 381.
[235] 'The Means of Grace' (1746), BEW, I, 382.
[236] 'The Means of Grace' (1746), BEW, I, 391.
[237] 'Sermon on the Mount, IV' (1748), BEW, I, 537, 541.
[238] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 440.
[239] Marquardt, John Wesley's Social Ethics (1992), pp. 89-118.
[240] Jennings, Good News to the Poor (1990), p. 17.
[241] See BEW, I, 343 and note.
[242] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765) BEW, II, 163.

and expect it *now!*'.[243] Consequently, it is attained instantaneously'.[244] In that instant there is a death to sin.[245]

3.4.4. Entire Sanctification

It was Wesley's belief that the reorientation of faith on Christ as its proper object, that occurred in justification, led to expressions of works of love and eventually to the renovation of the image of God and the mind of Christ in every Christian believer, which would cast out the remains of original sin. This was the unique work of the Holy Spirit. As such, justification was then seen as what God does for the believer through his Son, while sanctification is seen as what God works in the believer by his Spirit.[246]

The historical development of the doctrine of Christian perfection was traced by Wesley himself in, 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection'. There, it was maintained by Wesley that throughout the development the normative definition of sanctification was love for God, love for neighbour, and having the mind which was in Christ which comes as the result of being renewed in the image of God, i.e. in the image of righteousness and true holiness, or the internal righteousness of Christ.[247] In spite of his insistence of this expression being the doctrinal constant there were several shifts in his supportive opinions to the doctrine.

The first shift was that he admitted that he had overstated his case in the preface to 'A Collection of Psalms and Hymns' (1741), and had been 'far too strong'

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[243] 'The Scripture Way of Salvation' (1765), BEW, II, 169.
[244] 'On Patience' (1784), BEW, III, 178-79.
[245] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766/77), Works, XI, 402.
[246] 'Justification by Faith' (1746), BEW, I, 187.
[247] 'The Circumcision of the Heart' (1733), BEW, I, 402, in, 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766/77), Works, XI, 367; 'The Character of Methodist' (1742), BEW, IX, 35-36, in 'A Plain Account', Works, XI, 371; 'Minutes of some late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 279, in 'A Plain Account' (1766/77), Works, XI, 387.

in what he said regarding the extent of perfection.[248] This would have coincided with his reading of Gell. He eventually corrected himself in his sermon, 'Wandering Thoughts' by re-emphasizing the nature of improper sin, thus reducing the scope of perfectability.[249]

Second, he also admitted that until about 1758-59 he had been wrong in thinking that Christian perfection was incapable of being lost,[250] a mistake that was put forth in some of the hymns.[251] After 1758-59, experience taught him that it was capable of being lost. Entire sanctification could not completely eradicate original sin and restore the image of God once and for all. At one time he quipped, 'Hardly three in five' keep their sanctification 'a year'.[252] The obvious inconsistency of holding the view that Christian perfection was incapable of being lost was that instead of perseverance of the saints in the state of justification, it would have been perseverance of the saints in the state of sanctification. This was the second notable change in his thinking.

The third change in his thinking was more subtle than the first two. The point of contention where sanctification was concerned was not if it was to take place, but when.[253] Was it to take place before death, at death, or after death? With a logic that sounded much like Gell's, it was Wesley's firm conviction that sanctification occurs in this lifetime,[254] and that no one who seeks to be sanctified will not die without being sanctified, even if only at death. If it occurs in this lifetime he thought it should be sought sooner,

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[248] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 379.

[249] 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 126-37.

[250] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 442, cf. 'Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1763), Q. 21, 30, in, Works, XI, 422, 426; and, 'Brief Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1767), Works, XI, 446.

[251] 'Brief Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1767), Works, XI, 446. He did not mention which hymns were guilty, and it is difficult to tell which ones he may have had in mind.

[252] JWL, V, 273 (1771).

[253] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 294.

[254] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 296.

instead of later, and attained today.[255] Eventually, however, he would come to say, 'As to the time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before.'[256] Although Wesley still believed in sanctification in this lifetime, there was a shift from thinking 'now' was the normative experience to 'the instant of death' as the normative experience. Perhaps this should be interpreted as corresponding development with the amissability of the experience. The problem was not obtaining the experience but maintaining it.

Eventually, Wesley was just as careful to say what he thought Christian perfection was not: (1) perfection in knowledge so as to be free from ignorance; (2) freedom from mistakes; (3) freedom from infirmities; (4) freedom from temptations;[257] (5) absolute perfection;[258] or freedom from 'wandering thoughts'.[259] Neither is it (6) angelic perfection; or (7) Adamic perfection.[260] In short, Christian perfection is not the complete renewal of the natural and political aspects of the image of God. Neither does it consist of freedom from sins 'improperly so called' that are 'inseparable from mortality', which arise from the marred natural and political images.[261] Instead, it is the renewal of the moral image of God, which consists of the internal righteousness of Christ. In this way he was able to talk about Christian perfection, while at the same time conceding to the 'opposers of perfection' that 'we will

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[255] 'Minutes of Some Late Conversations' (1749), Works, VIII, 285, in, 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 387.

[256] 'Brief Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1767), Works, XI, 446.

[257] 'Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection' (1763), Q. 14; in Works, XI, 419.

[258] 'Christian Perfection' (1741), BEW, II, 100-04; cf. 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766), Works, XI, 374.

[259] 'Wandering Thoughts' (1762), BEW, II, 132-34.

[260] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 72-73.

[261] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1766), Works, XI, 396.

allow sin, a little sin, to remain in us till death'.[262] This quiet concession amounted to a re-approximation of the Lutheran view that certain aspects of the 'remains of sin', however minute, are ineradicable (fomes peccati).

This concession acknowledged what his doctrine of original sin, as it was developed by 1757, allowed- moral perfection without human perfection. The moral residue of original sin could be removed while the aspects of humanity associated with the residual effects of the marred political and natural image remained until death.

The variances and changes aside, in terms of the relational aspect of eternal reason, entire sanctification was for Wesley the purification of our relationships with God and neighbour from selfishness and egocentricity. In terms of the rational aspect of eternal reason, Christian perfection was for Wesley being renewed in the image of God and having the mind which was in Christ. To obtain this the moral image of God is renewed in the believer. In renewing the moral image of God a desire for obedience replaces a desire for disobedience.

3.5. Glorification

Wesley would not have dared to presume that the renovated image of God reflects the Father in the same way Christ's does, or even in the same way Adam's did before the fall. There are certain parts of the image of God that entire sanctification does not pretend to restore, for example perfect knowledge,[263] and liberty.[264] Wesley indicated this when he wrote,

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[262] 'On Perfection' (1784), BEW, III, 85.

[263] 'The Imperfection of Human Knowledge' (1784), BEW, II, 568-86; 'The Case of Reason Impartially Considered', (1781), BEW, II, 587-600.

[264] Wesley does, however, speak of us having both a 'liberty of contradiction' [i.e. a liberty to do both good or evil], and a 'liberty of contrariety' [i.e. a liberty to do or not to do good or evil], cf. 'What is Man?' (1787), BEW, IV, 24, and note 19.

> But it may be observed the Son of God does not destroy the whole work of the devil in man, so long as he remains in this life. He does not yet destroy bodily weakness, sickness, pain, and a thousand infirmities incidental to flesh and blood. He does not destroy all that weakness of understanding which is the natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in a corruptible body; so that still[...]both ignorance and error belong to humanity. He entrusts us with only an exceeding small share of knowledge in our present state, lest our knowledge should interfere with our humility, and we should again affect to be as gods. It is to remove from us all temptation to pride, and all thought of independency (which is the very things that men in general so earnestly covet, under the name of 'liberty') that he leaves us encompassed with all these infirmities-particularly weaknesses of understanding-till the sentence takes place, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return!' Then error, pain, and all bodily infirmities cease: all these are destroyed by death. And death itself, 'the last enemy' of man, shall be destroyed at the resurrection. The moment that we hear the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, 'then shall be fulfilled the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. This corruptible body shall put on incorruption; this mortal body shall put on immortality;' and the son of God, manifested in the clouds of heaven, shall destroy this last work of the devil.[285]

The phrase 'work of the devil' functioned as a euphemism for the remains of sin. But what he described was actually what one might call the remains of sin improperly so called. The remains of sin improperly so called will not be destroyed until glorification, the final step in Wesley's order of salvation. Consequently a tension results between the existential aspects of entire sanctification and the eschatological aspects of glorification, and to what extent each restore the image of God. Glorification will consist of the complete renovation of the complete image of God in all its aspects. Every aspect of human relationships will be restored- the divine/human relationship, the human/creation relationship, and the interpersonal relationships of glorified believers. This will happen

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[285] 'The End of Christ's Coming' (1781), BEW, II, 482.

only after death and the resurrection when final justification takes place and the justified are given a glorified body. Then the therapy of the soul will be complete.

> Hence will arise an unmixed state of holiness and happiness far superior to that which Adam enjoyed in paradise. In how beautiful and affecting a manner is this described by the Apostle! 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there by any more pain; for the former things are done away.' As there will be no more death, and nor more pain or sickness preparatory thereto; as there will be no more grieving for a parting with friends; so there will be no more sorrow or crying. Nay, but there will be a greater deliverance than all this; for there will be no more sin. And to crown all, there will be a deep, an intimate, an uninterrupted union with God; a constant communion with thee Father and his Son Jesus Christ, through the Spirit; a continual enjoyment of the Three-One God, and of all the creatures in him![266]

Here one sees in Wesley the consumation of trinitarian salvation as it reaches its proper end- uninterrupted and undivided union with the Triune God.

And yet, even when one considers the evil caused by the permission of free-will, even they will work for the good of the redeemed. In view of this redemption,

> we may well praise God for permitting these temporary evils in order to our eternal good. Ye, we may well cry out: 'O the depth both of the wisdom and of the goodness of God! He hath done all things well. Glory be unto God, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.'[267]

The renewal of the image of God and mind of Christ in the justified, sanctified, and glorified believer was Wesley's ultimate solution to the problem of evil, and the effects of sin, restoring the proper relations between God and the redeemed, which had been lost through original sin.

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[266] 'The New Creation' (1785), BEW, II, 509-10.
[267] 'God's Approbation of His Works' (1782), BEW, II, 399.

Conclusions

1. A Critique

In chapter one three important concepts emerged. The first was Wesley's epistemology, which consisted of Scripture, reason, and experience. It was then shown how these concepts were derived from and related to the scale of assent. Within the scale of assent to more important concepts emerged: eternal reason, which was rational and relational in nature; and, experience.

It was suggested that eternal reason (i.e. the nature of God, and nature of humanity, and the necessary relations that exist between them) was a central concept to Wesley's Christian system. By eternal reason Wesley defined evil, understood the moral law, and even related it to the image of God and the mind of Christ.

It was within the context of experience that the concept of personhood was developed, which for Wesley consisted of a body and a soul. It is precisely here that Wesley's doctrine of sin started to have difficulties. Wesley could never resolve the relationship between the physical and the metaphysical, and to what extent a metaphysical explanation and understanding of original sin related to the physical world. The specific example of this was the relationship between the soul as it was defiled with original sin and the body which was ontologically neutral to Wesley. His definitions of actual sin properly and improperly so called were an attempt to distinguish between the physical and metaphysical attributes of sin. The physical attributes which contributed to his understanding of sin were termed sin improperly so called. The metaphysical attributes which contributed to his understanding of sin were termed properly so called. However, as he attempted to define what was essentially a metaphysical attribute he resorted to epistemological language, the language of cognition and volition. This defined sin in terms of personality, which was, according to his concept of personhood, to be understood as an attribute distinct from personhood itself. Although his opening argument in Doctrine of Original Sin sought to establish the relationship between original sin and actual sin, his doctrine of actual sin was not developed in relationship to original sin but holy living, which associated actual sin with ethical behaviour and not metaphysics. The definition

of personal sin became the means by which Wesley sought to adjust the measure of the attainability of Christian perfection, so that it was neither too high or too low. Defining Christian perfection in such a way so that it was neither too high nor too low was a concern from the early days of his ministry until the later period.[1] It is what kept together the two dialectical doctrines of original sin and total depravity (a doctrine he drew more from the western and Augustinian tradition), and his concern for sanctification and the renewal of the image of God and the mind of Christ (a doctrine he drew more from the Eastern tradition).

While his theology displayed a holistic quality his anthropology did not. His rejection of the Lockian duality of mind/body in favour of soul/body duality formed the basis of his anthropology. This was not as progressive, or as innovative as his trinitarian anthropology, which he eventually expressed as relationality. This demonstrated that while Wesley defined a Christian's existence in terms of his or her sociality, a sociality ultimately derived from the relational nature of the trinitarian image and love of God and neighbour, he failed to define personhood in a similar way, resulting in a disjunction between the physical and metaphysical nature of personhood.

2. A Proposed Resolution

Historically, what one sees in Wesley is a transition from a purely rational understanding of the image of God to a more relational understanding of it. It is at this point that Wesley studies may benefit from current discussions in systematic theology regarding theological anthropology, particularly as noted in the introduction. Perhaps one way the problem of the disjunction of personhoood could be circumvented is to discuss personhood, and not just distinctively Christian personhood, in terms of relationality, rather than duality, thus defining personhood as one who exists in relation to God and neighbour. These relationships constitute personhood, either fallen or redeemed. Sin,

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[1] 'A Plain Account of Christian Perfection' (1777), Works, XI, 397.

either original or actual, is what estranges one from God and neighbour. Original sin is an imputed estrangement from both God and to a certain extent creation, which is constitutive to human existence. This was the thrust of Wesley's doctrine of original sin, which he eventually discussed in terms of the lost moral and the marred natural and political aspects of the image of God. The estrangement with God as a result of having lost the moral image is initially overcome by prevenient grace, which is not to be confused with saving grace. Actual sin is one's own participation in the estrangement from God and neighbour. What constitutes that estrangement is the lack of love for God and neighbour, which can only result from faith being orientated on the Father as revealed in the Son, through the Holy Spirit. This orientation, which is known simply as faith, begins at justification which renews the saving relationship with God. Faith as orientation eventually leads to entire sanctification which is what purifies selfishness, the essence of original sin, from one's relationships with God and neighbour. The final act of the renovation of the triune image of God and the complete restoration of relationality does not take place until glorification, when humanity and all creation shall be renewed. Looking at anthropology, hamartiology, and soteriology in this way provides a greater logical and interdoctrinal consistency, while at the same time working with a central concept of Wesley's own Christian system, eternal reason, or the nature of God and the nature of woman and man, and the necessary relations that exist between them.

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